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AN
ESSAY
ON
Spanish Literature,

CONTAINING

*Its History, from the commencement of the Twelfth
Century, to the present time ;*

WITH AN

ACCOUNT OF THE BEST WRITERS,

In their several Departments,

AND SOME

CRITICAL REMARKS:

FOLLOWED BY

A History of the Spanish Drama,

AND

Specimens of some of the Writers of the different Ages.

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DEDICATED, BY PERMISSION,

TO HIS EXCELLENCY

THE DUKE OF SAN CARLOS,

AMBASSADOR FROM HIS CATHOLIC MAJESTY TO THE COURT  
OF LONDON, &c. &c.

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By A. ANAYA.

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1818.





AN  
ESSAY

OF  
SPANISH LITERATURE

IN WHICH THE  
PROGRESS OF THE  
ARTS AND SCIENCES  
IN THAT KINGDOM  
FROM THE  
FIRST SETTLEMENT  
TO THE PRESENT  
TIME IS  
DESCRIBED  
AND  
THE  
CAUSES OF  
ITS  
DECLINE  
AND  
RECOVERY  
ARE  
EXAMINED

BY  
J. H. P. J. J.

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TO HIS EXCELLENCY

DON JOSÉ MIGUEL DE CARVAJAL  
MANRIQUE DE LARA.

DUKE OF SAN CARLOS,

*Hereditary Postmaster-General for the Indies,  
Grundee of Spain of the First Class, &c., Knight  
of the Golden Fleece, Grand Cross of the Orders  
of Charles the Third and Isabel the Catholic,  
and also of other Foreign Orders; Knight Com-  
mander of the Order of Alcantara, Lieutenant-  
General, Counsellor of State, Lord Steward,  
Perpetual President of the Spanish Academy,  
Member of other Academies, and Ambassador  
from His Most Catholic Majesty to the Court of  
London.*

MY LORD DUKE,

As the object of my Work is to contribute to the glory of Spanish Literature, I naturally address myself to your Excellency, who, as one of the chief ornaments of an Institution founded for its support, is necessarily interested



in its honour. The unanimous accord of Europe, especially of Germany, a country which has just yielded its testimony to the literary acquirements and eminent qualifications that distinguish your Excellency, is a sufficient reason why I should refrain from expatiating upon talents already known and admired, while it exempts me from the accusation of flattery, an accusation always excited by Authors' praises, however unequal they may be to the merit which awakened them.

I have the honour to be,

With the profoundest respect,

My Lord Duke,

Your Excellency's obliged

And very grateful Servant,

A. ANAYA.

*London, March, 1818.*



## PREFACE.

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A NEW Treatise on Spanish Literature may, probably, appear unnecessary at the present period, and in a country in which the subject has been, and continues daily to be, illustrated by learned writers, equally estimable for their judicious arrangement and knowledge of the matter discussed, and for that noble impartiality which is the characteristic of intelligent minds. But it is to be observed, that the productions above alluded to, and many of a similar nature published in Spain, are either confined to accounts of particular authors, or are not within the reach of all who take an interest in the question.

Circumstances having now restored to the Castilian language a part of its ancient reputation, and rendered it an object of the study and attention of foreigners, it has occurred to me that an Essay, which, by a brief detail, should direct the student to some of the authors who have written with the greatest purity in the ordinary departments of letters, would not



be wholly useless. But as I do not wish to restrict myself to a dry and uninteresting catalogue of names, I shall begin by giving an historical account of Spanish Literature from its infancy to our own times; and then notice some of the works of those authors who were deservedly eminent in the sixteenth and following centuries, annexing various critical remarks.

In conclusion, I shall trace a sketch of the rise and progress of the dramatic art in Spain, which must be peculiarly interesting, as it is in that branch of literature that many of her greatest writers have excelled.

Having stated the object of this little Treatise, I may be permitted to say a few words respecting the mode in which it has been composed. In this respect I have followed the example of a celebrated French writer, who is said to have written one of his productions three several times, at each revision subtracting the superfluous expressions which had escaped his former scrutiny. May I flatter myself that I have succeeded in my endeavour to express with brevity and precision the information I have attempted to convey to the English student?



AN  
ESSAY.

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HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF SPANISH LITERATURE, FROM THE FORMATION OF THE CASTILIAN LANGUAGE TO OUR OWN TIMES.

THE history of Spanish Literature may be divided into four epochs; the first extending from its origin in the twelfth century, till the commencement of the sixteenth, the golden age of Spain: the second, till the decline of letters: the third, till their restoration; and the fourth from that period till our own times.

FIRST EPOCH.

IN the beginning of the eighth century, the Moors invaded Spain.\* Unable to resist the

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\* The motive that occasioned the irruption of the Arabs into Spain was as follows: Don Rodrigo, the last king of the Goths, violated Doña Florinda, the daughter of Count Julian, upon whom was unjustly bestowed the appellation of *La Cava*, an Arabic term, signifying a woman of bad character. The Count, who was then



torrent which was about to overwhelm them, those Spaniards who would not submit to the Saracen yoke, took refuge in the mountains of Asturias and Biscay; and amongst those rugged recesses, *Don Pelayo*, of the blood royal of the Goths, formed a new kingdom, which, successively extending itself and ramifying into others, deprived the enemies of Spain, portion by portion, of their conquests, until they were entirely expelled, after a residence of nearly eight centuries in that country. Masters of the largest and fairest part of the Peninsula, the Moors cultivated letters and the sciences with the most complete success, especially the Mathematics and Astronomy, as well as Medicine, Chemistry, and other branches of Natural History; nor did they neglect to found academies and colleges for the instruction of their youth.\* The beauty of a climate

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in Africa, prevailed upon the Africans to invade Spain. They passed the Straits, and having overcome king Don Rodrigo, who perished in the action, proceeded to augment their conquests. This subject, one of the most poetical that history affords, has been embellished by the pen of Mr. Southey.

\* See Andres, *Origen, Progresos, &c. de toda la Literatura*, Tomo I. Cap. 9. and Tomo II. Cap. 11; Bailly, *Histoire de l'Astronomie Moderne*, Tome I. Lib. 8; and Murphy, *History of the Mahomedan Empire in Spain*.



always unclouded, but not sultry like that of Africa, the continual wars which the Moors maintained with the ancient inhabitants of the country for the purpose of extending and preserving their conquests, and the feasts and tournaments with which the monarchs of that warlike and gallant nation endeavoured to sustain the martial character of their subjects; all these circumstances inspired and encouraged that romantic spirit which distinguishes their poetry and other works of imagination.

Those remote times gave birth to the Castilian language, and with it to Spanish literature, which, from the example of the Arabs, the communication held by them with the Spaniards, and the emulation which was constantly excited, continued to advance with rapid strides towards perfection. Spain, indeed, at that period, was the centre of knowledge, and the school to which all who were desirous of instruction, repaired from every quarter of the globe.

The earliest literary productions which have reached our times are the Romances of the Cid, a species of popular ballads, wherein

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*Casiri* mentions 1800 Arabic MSS. extant in the Library of the Escorial.



were celebrated the exploits of that hero,\* and the poem on the same subject, composed in the twelfth century, by an author whose name is unknown.

These primitive compositions were followed by the poems of Gonzalo de Berceo, in the thirteenth century, and that of *Alexandro*, by Juan Lorenzo, which cannot be cited either as models of language, or of poetic diction, since they were composed when the Castilian tongue was in its infancy; but they, nevertheless, contain expressions replete with spirit and energy, simple and natural descriptions, and other passages of considerable beauty, for which they have been deservedly transmitted to posterity. But the writer who contributed most to the improvement of literature at this period, was king Don Alphonso or Alonso the Tenth. This learned monarch, who may be considered the father of the Castilian language, as Dante is of the Italian, not satisfied with promoting

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\* Rodrigo de Bivar, surnamed the Cid, which, in the Arabic language, signifies *Lord*, lived in the 11th century. He gained several signal victories over the Moors. The poem of the Cid has been translated into German and into English. The tragedy of Guillen de Castro, and the ballads upon the same subject, furnished Corneille with the materials for his Cid. Lord Holland has written an able dissertation on Guillen de Castro.



the study of his native tongue, encouraging translations of every species of writing from the Latin, Arabic and Chaldaic, and ordaining, after the example of his father Don Fernando, that all decrees and public acts should be written in Castilian, presided over the formation of various literary projects, and composed a considerable number of historical, mathematical, philosophical and poetical works, which immortalize his name, and have obtained for him the glorious appellation of the *Wise*. Amongst these projects the astronomical tables called, after his name, *Alphonsine*, deserve to be recorded; also the compilation of the code styled, *De las siete Partidas*, which, from its extraordinary merit, is the most glorious monument of that epoch.\*

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\* Don Alonso the Wise was the author of *El Libro de las Armellas*, a work on Astronomy; *The General History of Spain*; that of *Ultramar*, or of the *Crusades*; *The Life of king Don Fernando*, his father; *El Tesoro*; *El Septenario*; *Los Fueros* (the laws) *de Valladolid*; *El Libro de las Querellas* (the Book of Complaints); *Las Cantigas* (the Canticles); and other productions noticed in the works of Don Nicolas Antonio, in those of Sarmiento, and of the Marquis of Mondejar. It is observable that in the Canticles the musical notes of Aretino are introduced, and also the five lines and keys invented subsequently. (See *Andres*, Tomo II. p. 55.) King Don Alonso was the first who introduced the paper of the Arabs made from flax.



The encouragement which this great monarch, with a munificence truly regal, afforded to his own subjects, and to the learned of other nations whom he attracted to his court, contributed above every other stimulus to the progress of the Language and Literature; which, during his reign and those of his immediate successors, derived new splendour from a considerable number of excellent productions. Amongst these, the most deserving of mention are the entertaining and moral fiction *El Conde Lucanor*, and other writings by Don Juan Manuel, grandson to king Don Fernando; the *Chronicles* and other original and translated works of Lopez de Ayala, who was born in 1332; and the ingenious poem by the *Archipreste de Hita*.\*

Equally favourable with the reign of Don Alonso, to the progress of letters, was that of Don Juan, which commenced about the beginning of the fifteenth century. The example of this monarch, who delighted in courting the muses, the principal grandees of his court

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\* Juan Ruiz, Archipreste de Hita, a poet of the fourteenth century, was the first in Spain who attempted burlesque poetry. The subject of his poem is a curious contest between the Carnival and Lent.



treading in the footsteps of the sovereign; the academies and literary meetings held in the palaces of the king and of his nobles; the balls, assemblies and tournaments which, being given in honour of the fair sex, excited a general feeling of emulation; all these causes concurring constituted the court of this prince the centre of knowledge, and contributed no less to the progress of the language and literature than to the civilization of the people.

It would be foreign to my purpose to give a detailed account of all the Castilian writers who flourished in the reign of Don Juan the Second, but they are enumerated in the *Biblioteca Hispana Vetus*, by Don Nicolas Antonio, and the collection made by Don Thomas Sanchez; I shall content myself with naming the Marques de Villena,\* who, in his *Gaya Ciencia* and other learned productions, reduced to precepts the art of versification; the Marques

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\* The Marquis of Villena, of the blood royal of Aragon, occupies one of the principal places among the authors of his time. His knowledge was so extensive that he was taken for a necromancer. His library was partly burnt in consequence of this belief. (See *Letters of Cibdadreal to Juan de Mena*.)



de Santillana,\* Mena,† Macias,‡ Fernan Gomez,  
de Cibdadreal,§ the Bachellor Alphonso de

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\* The Marquis of Santillana produced, among other works, a poem upon the Creation of the World, another upon a Naval Fight against the Genoese, a Collection of Proverbs in verse, many Sonnets, &c.

† Juan de Mena was the author of two poems, *El Laberinto*, and *La Coronacion*, both replete with noble and sublime imagery, and energetic expressions. The second of these poems was written in honour of the Marquis of Santillana.

‡ Macias, an amatory poet of this epoch, is even better known by his unfortunate fate than by his works. He was passionately in love with a young lady, who was obliged to bestow her hand upon another of rank and fortune superior to those of Macias. The two lovers still retained their attachment for each other, and the Marquis of Villena, whose dependant Macias was, judged it expedient to have him confined for some time, in the hope of curing him of his passion, but the jealous husband having found means to thrust his lance through the bars of the prison in which he was immured, pierced him through the heart whilst he was composing a poem expressive of his love. The poet expired like a hero of romance, with the name of his mistress trembling on his lips.

§ Fernan Gomez, known by the name of Cibdadreal, has left behind him 105 letters, very interesting, not merely on account of their merit as compositions, but because they contain the secret history of his time.



la Torre,\* Fernan Perez de Guzman, Lord of Batres, and the historian Fernando del Púlgar.† These, with others, were the most splendid ornaments of this monarch's reign, whose court was compared by contemporary writers to that of Apollo.‡

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\* Alphonso de la Torre wrote a philosophical work, wherein, under the veil of allegory, he developed the principles of morality and politics for the benefit of the heir to the crown of Aragon. The title of his work is *Vision deleytable* (The Delightful Vision).

† Fernando del Pulgar, Secretary to Ferdinand and Isabella, was the author of an historical work, entitled *Claros Varones de Castilla*, (Renowned Men of Castille,) and likewise of several letters. Capmany, among other eulogiums upon Fernando del Pulgar, says: "It may be affirmed, that this author writes on serious subjects with more delicacy, and on important ones with more elegance, than any writer of his time." (*Teat. Crit.* Tomo I. p. 133.)

‡ Doña Isabel, wife to Don Fernando the Catholic, succeeded her father, Don Juan the Second. This great Queen, distinguished by her virtues, the share that she had in the conquest of Granada, and the discovery of America, was greatly instrumental in furthering the progress of the language and of letters. Capmany, in his *Teat. Critico de la Eloquencia Española*, Tomo I., has inserted two of this Queen's letters. See also *Robertson's Charles the Fifth*.



## SECOND EPOCH.

**T**HIS epoch redounds most to the glory of Spain, since, whilst her warriors were extending her victorious arms through various parts of Europe, and adding to her crown new dominions in America, her writers were enriching her literary stores with so many excellent works, that this has been deservedly entitled the Golden Age of Spain.

A mere enumeration of the writers of this period would suffice to display the richness of Spanish literature. The *Biblioteca Hispana Nova*, by D. Nicolas Antonio, one of the best works of this kind extant, enumerates 7365 native writers, without reckoning the Portuguese, who flourished within the space of 184 years, that is, from 1500 to 1684.\*

As the list of productions which I shall

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\* Spanish as well as Italian literature possesses the merit of priority, which may be ascertained by comparing the Augustan age of Spain with that of most other modern nations. I leave the reader to make the reflections which are naturally suggested by this consideration.



introduce in the second part of this Essay, will comprehend the works that appeared during and subsequent to the sixteenth century, I shall confine the history of this epoch to an account of the formation and progress of the language, which then attained its highest degree of perfection.\*

#### HISTORY OF THE FORMATION AND PROGRESS OF THE SPANISH LANGUAGE.

It is not known to a certainty what language was spoken by the primitive inhabitants of Spain, although the strongest arguments have been adduced in favour of the Biscanian.† But whatever it might have been, it must unquestionably have remained incorrupt until the intercourse of the ancient Spaniards with the Celts, who came from Gaul, and gave the name of Celtiberia to a part of Spain, and

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\* Among the illustrious Spaniards of this epoch, Father Pedro Ponce, a Benedictine Monk, deserves a distinguished place, for his useful discovery of the art of teaching the deaf and dumb, which has rendered such important service to humanity. (See *Ambrosio de Morales* and *Valles*, cited by Feyjoo in his *Teatro Critico*, Tomo IV. Disc. xiv.)

† See the Preface to the Dictionary of Larramendi, and other works.



with the Carthagenians, who made themselves masters of a great portion of that country.\*

This intercourse occasioned the introduction of foreign words, although few traces remain of those of Punic origin, either because they are entirely forgotten, or because the number derived from that source was but few. The Greeks, for the study of whose tongue there were schools in Spain, contributed more than the foregoing people to enrich the language.

Such are the vicissitudes which the primitive Spanish Idiom underwent, until, on account

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\* Tubal, the son of Japhet, was the first man who came into Spain; *Mariana Hist. de España*, Cap. 1. Aristotle says that the Phenicians were the first who arrived in the Straits of Cadiz. They obtained, by bartering oil which they brought with them, such a quantity of silver from the inhabitants of Tarteso, now called Tarifa, that, their ships being unable to contain it, they were obliged to manufacture it into anchors and other instruments for maritime use; *Mariana*, Lib. I. Cap. 15. The Carthagenians, attracted by the riches of Spain, proceeded thither, and seeing the difficulty of making themselves masters of the country by force, requested permission to erect magazines, temples and houses; that being granted, they availed themselves of it to build fortresses; by which means they ultimately succeeded in their design.



of the long residence of the Romans in the country, the Latin language, although not without some opposition, became generally used, and more than any other language aided the formation of the Castilian. The Spaniards then enriched the literature of their conquerors with many productions, amongst which are the Treatise on Geography, by Pomponius Mela, that on Agriculture, by Columela, the poems of Lucan, the two Senecas and Martial, the writings of Florus, Silius Italicus, and above all, the Institutes of Quinctilian, the restorer of literature.\*

The tribes who came from the north of Europe, known by the general name of Goths, after having overthrown the Roman dominion, took possession of Spain, over which they ruled about three centuries, that is, from the

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\* The three Spanish Emperors who filled the Roman throne, greatly assisted the progress of literature. Trajan, whose virtues were so extraordinary that, at the inauguration of their emperors, the Roman people prayed the gods to bestow upon them the good fortune of Augustus and the benevolence of Trajan, was an enlightened protector of letters, and promoted the efforts of Quinctilian. Adrian was a philosopher and a poet. The age of Theodosius the Great is the golden age of ecclesiastical literature.



beginning of the fifth till the eighth. These people, although they could not effect the banishment of the Latin tongue, which then prevailed, not only injured its harmony by their peculiar accentuation, but also disfigured its beauty by the introduction of barbarous words and phrases.

The Goths were succeeded by the Arabs, who, from their long residence and intercourse with the inhabitants of the country, but more especially on account of the number of works with which they enriched literature, the object of Spanish study, introduced a considerable number of words, principally technical, relating to Algebra, Astronomy, and other favourite sciences of the Arabs. Cervantes affirms that all the Castilian words which begin with *al*, as *alguazil*, *almohada*, &c. are derived from the Arabic.

The union of so many languages gave birth, about the ninth century, to the Castilian, so termed from the Province of Castile, which was afterwards called Spanish, when it became the language of the Court and supreme tribunals of that monarchy.

This tongue, as I have already stated, sub-



sequently assumed a more regular form in the time of king Don Fernando, and still more in the reign of his son, Don Alonso the Wise, and continued progressively to improve during the following reigns, until it attained its highest perfection in the sixteenth century, the writers of which age gave it suavity, volume and other qualities, by which it is peculiarly characterized.\*

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\* The pre-eminence which one language possesses over another may be attributed to two causes,—harmony and copiousness. The regular and well-ordered distribution of the accents in the Castilian language, which arises from the number of short,\* acute and long words that it possesses, and from its free construction, which allows the writer to place the words as they sound best, and not absolutely according to the rules of grammar, occasion that cadence which charms and delights the ear. Its copiousness is such, that it possesses a sufficiency of words and phrases to express with equal propriety the sublime and awful truths of religion, and the soft and tender effusions of pastoral poetry; while its fitness for translation is proved by the versions of foreign works, which preserve in this language their characteristic energy and beauty of style, as the several translations from the Latin, that of Tacitus, and particularly that of Sallust, by his Serene Highness Don Gabriel, Infant of Spain. The Castilian language possesses augmentatives

\* See my *Traité sur les Difficultés de la Poésie Espagnole et Italienne*.



These qualities, together with the ascendancy which the Spaniards obtained by their conquests and their literary productions, rendered it so universal at that period, that, as Cervantes and the learned author of *El Dialogo de las Lenguas* assert, there was not a man or woman in France or Italy who did not learn it. In fact, companies of Spanish Comedians used to go about to the theatres of Europe, representing their Comedies; and Sermons were preached in that language at Rome, in the presence and with the approbation of the Pope and the chief personages of that city.\*

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and diminutives like the Italian; is fertile in compound, frequentative and imitative verbs. It also abounds in proverbs; the collection made by Don Juan de Iriarte alone containing twenty-four thousand. Finally, I shall allege as a proof of the richness of this language, five Novels, which compose a large volume, each of them wanting a vowel, the first being without *a*, the second without *e*, &c. a curiosity that could not be so easily produced in other languages.

\* The same statement is made by foreign writers. I shall only cite what is affirmed by the authors of *l'Année Littéraire*, in their judgment on the discourse of Mr. Rivaroles upon the general usage of the French language, viz. that the Italian and Spanish languages were formerly considered a part of French education, and till the time of Corneille, the literature of France was still Spanish.



I annex a curious calculation made by *El Padre Manuel Larramendi*, which attempts to prove, according to the opinion of its author, (an opinion, however, not confirmed by other learned writers,) the precise number of primitive words for which the Castilian language is indebted to each of the languages that have contributed to its formation. Words may be divided into radical and derivative; *amor*, for instance, is a radical word, and *amar*, *amante*, *amable*, and all those which are formed from it, are derivative ones. The Castilian language possesses, according to the first edition of the Dictionary of the Academy, 13,365 radical words, which are distributed in the following manner:—

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(No. II. Jan. 31st, 1786.) Mr. Duclos enlarges upon Mr. Rivaroles. See *Mémoire sur l'Origine de la Langue Française*, pp. 175, 176. To this may be added, that Antonio Perez was appointed Master of Language to Henry the Fourth, King of France. See his letter to that monarch, in which he names several persons of high rank in France and England, who cultivated the Spanish language. (Capmany, *Teat. Crit.* Tomo I.) The departure of Fernando de Santiago was particularly regretted by Paul the Fifth. Toledo preached twenty-four years at Rome. See the praises pronounced upon the latter, as well as upon Alphonso Lobo, by Cardinal Borromée. Lib. 2 and 3, quoted by Ab. Andres.



|                            |        |
|----------------------------|--------|
| Latin .....                | 5385   |
| Gothic .....               | 14     |
| Arabic .....               | 555    |
| Greek .....                | 973    |
| Persian .....              | 6      |
| Chinese .....              | 1      |
| Turkish .....              | 1      |
| Castilian .....            | 3040   |
| Hebrew .....               | 90     |
| Lemosin .....              | 1      |
| Of unknown derivation..... | 2786   |
| French .....               | 198    |
| Italian .....              | 156    |
| Onomatop:.....             | 87     |
| Indian .....               | 14     |
| Biscaian .....             | 6      |
| English .....              | 7      |
| American .....             | 30     |
| German .....               | 27     |
| Flemish .....              | 1      |
| Hungarian .....            | 2      |
|                            | <hr/>  |
|                            | 13,380 |

By a trifling error, which, as Larramendi observes, is unavoidable in a calculation of this nature, there is a difference of 15 between the above estimate and the amount of 13,365, stated by that author, out of which number of words he pretends 1951 are derived from the Biscaian tongue.



### THIRD EPOCH.

**T**HE epoch in which the literary glory of a nation, after the united efforts of many ages, attains its highest point of elevation, is the precursor of its decline, since its writers of great genius finding every subject and style of writing exhausted, and disdaining to become imitators, take a different path from that which their predecessors followed, and thereby occasion material detriment to letters.

The depraved taste which in the beginning of the seventeenth century had begun to manifest itself in Spanish literature and poetry, continued its ravages until about the middle of the same century, when it finally accomplished the destruction of literary excellence. In place of the richness of idiom which caused the chief splendour of literature during the preceding epoch, were substituted the tinsel of false brilliancy, a puerile play upon words, antitheses, weak ideas, studied conceits, absurd metaphors, the vain pomp of erudition, and other miserable vanities of a similar nature,



with which some foreigners reproach the Spaniards, although at the period in question they were by no means peculiar to the writers of that nation. Various are the opinions with respect to the authors of this evil;\* but I am inclined to adopt that of Capmany, who attributes it to the preachers, whose influence and ill example must necessarily have drawn in the rest of the literati.† This class, relinquishing the admirable school of Granada, Avila, and

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\* The anonymous author of *Declamacion contra los Abusos introducidos en el Castellano*, (Declamation against the Abuses introduced into the Castilian Language,) places amongst the number of those whose example occasioned the corruption of style, Saavedra, the author of *Las Empresas Politicas*, and Solis, the author of *La Conquista de Mexico*, on account of the short periods of the former, and the laboured style of the latter. But I am not of the same opinion, for the short periods of Saavedra, which would not be suitable to writings of another sort, are well adapted to maxims and aphorisms, such as his work contains. Saavedra deservedly occupies a distinguished place among the Spanish classical authors. Solis, it is true, has often tarnished his history by obscure passages, and some that evince a corrupt taste; but it was not Solis who introduced this taste, since it prevailed before his time; and, in spite of the spots that sometimes disfigure his work, he is justly esteemed one of the most elegant Spanish writers.

† *Teatro Critico*, Tomo V. p. 17.



others of the Augustan age of Spain, substituted in the place of that simplicity of style which sacred oratory requires, emblems and poetical figures, and embellished their conceptions, as the writer already quoted observes, with all that the sun shines upon, and the sea laves—plants, morning stars, rainbows, planets, north stars, horizons, &c. In fact, such was the bad taste which then prevailed in the pulpit in Spain, as well as in Italy, that Flechier derived great entertainment from the perusal of the discourses of these Italian and Spanish preachers, whom he used to term his buffoons.\*

Such is the picture of this epoch, which could not be reformed to the principles of good taste by the example of some excellent writers who were enabled to preserve themselves free from the general corruption, the restoration of letters being reserved for the succeeding epoch, in which they recovered some portion of their primitive splendour.

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\* *Eloge Historique de Mons. Esprit Flechier.*



#### FOURTH EPOCH.

**T**his epoch extends from the revival of letters to our own times. The literature of this epoch must be regarded under two very different aspects, the one as conducing to the glory of the nation, and the other as tending in no slight degree to its discredit. The Spaniards, previous to the age of Louis the Fourteenth of France, applied themselves rarely, or not at all, to the study of French literature; but after Philip the Fifth, a descendant of the Royal Family of France, was seated on the throne of Spain, the works of the French authors became generally read in the latter country. This circumstance, if, on the one hand it contributed to the improvement of the nation, by holding out the great writers who immortalized the reign of Louis the Fourteenth, as an example by which to learn how the flights of the imagination should be confined within the bounds of reason, was, nevertheless, productive on the other of one fatal consequence. By the translation of French books and periodical works, the language became impoverished, and



lost its ancient brilliancy under the influence of a crowd of feeble translators and servile imitators, who substituted for its primitive diction, words possessing neither the force nor elegance of those used by the writers of the Augustan age of Spain, and phrases foreign to the Castilian tongue, by which means they reduced that noble language to an absurd and almost unintelligible jargon. Nor does the mischief rest here; for in our times the furor of writing and printing books, which reigns in other countries, to the material detriment of all valuable literature, has been introduced into Spain, and with it a load of silly and extravagant productions, that only serve to corrupt good taste, and to disseminate the puerile and futile opinions which are excited by their perusal.

But among such a multitude of illiterate authors and incompetent translators, Spain produced during this epoch, although in fewer numbers than in the sixteenth century, men who benefited literature by several works written with judgment and solidity, and exempt from that farrago of erudition which is one of the chief blemishes of the writers of the preceding epoch, and even of many of the contemporaries of Cervantes.



One of the first writers to whom, according to my view of the subject, the restoration of letters may be attributed, is Father Benedict Feyjoo, who was born in the year 1676, and whose works are replete with the soundest philosophy, and the most extensive learning. These works, treating of almost all the arts and sciences, whilst they confuted and rendered obsolete many of the erroneous and superstitious opinions which were then maintained, are also in the highest degree estimable for the excellence of their style. Don Ignacio de Luzan effected in poetry what Feyjoo had done in prose, pointing out in his excellent *Art of Poetry*, as well as in his other works, the path which must be pursued by those who aspire to the glory that good poets have attained, but from which path their predecessors had so widely deviated. For an account of many of the literary productions of this period, I refer the curious reader to the lists in the Second Part of this Essay, and more especially to the *Ensayo de una Biblioteca Española*, by Don Juan Sempere, which contains an account of about 150 of the best writers of the reign of Charles the Third.\*

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\* As in the catalogue of authors I shall confine myself to works of history and polite literature, some mention



AN INQUIRY INTO THE CAUSES OF THE  
PREJUDICE EXISTING AGAINST SPANISH  
LITERATURE.

I have now traced an historical sketch of  
the progress of letters in Spain, from their

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here of the writers who have written upon other subjects, though not all in the Castilian language, may not be uninteresting to such as are applying themselves to those studies.

Don Francisco Perez Bayer was one of the most learned antiquarians in Europe: his writings merit the eulogiums pronounced upon them by the English author Edward Clarke, who says, that he possesses universal knowledge; by the Abbé Barthelemi, Mamachi, and others. —Don Gregorio Mayans y Siscar, besides the Life of Cervantes, and many other pieces of biography, enriched jurisprudence and other subjects with several learned dissertations. Velasquez and Father Flores, wrote some elaborate treatises upon medals and antiquities. Campomanes, Moñino, Casafonda and Marina, treated upon subjects of jurisprudence with great sagacity. The mathematics, the art of war, and navigation, owe much of their splendour to Cerda, Tosca, Bail, Count de Gazola (mentioned with praise by Clarke); to Don Jorge Juan, one of the companions of La Condamine, whose works have been translated into all languages; and to Don Jose Mazarredo, a writer in general estimation. In addition to these literati, an important place in the history of this period is occupied by Dr. Andres



origin to our own times. Before I proceed to give a detailed account of the most celebrated writers, it will not be wholly useless, nor foreign to the subject, to examine briefly the causes of the prejudices subsisting in the minds of many against Spanish literature. It has been remarked, that the literature of Spain is a mine of wealth, which has been singularly productive, while it is scarcely known. This assertion will not appear exaggerated, if, to the 7365 writers who flourished within the space of 184 years, and whose numerous works are noticed by Don Nicholas Antonio, in his *Bibliotheca Hispana Nova*, already quoted, we add those with whom that author was unacquainted, and all who wrote during the preceding epoch, and the two subsequent ones. It is true, that the literary glory of a nation consists rather in the quality than in the number of its productions. But it is easy to imagine, that among such a long series of works,

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Piquer, author of several medical works, of which honourable mention is made by M. Batres, and M. Fouquet; Dr. Gaspar Casal, who published *The Natural History of the Asturias*; Don Juan Ignacio Molina, whose work upon *The Natural History of Chili*, has been translated into French and German; and Don Antonio Ximeno, known in foreign countries by his *Essay upon Ancient and Modern Music*.



produced by a people whose genius and fertility of imagination are proverbial,\* and who, during their golden age, held communication with the most cultivated nations, and particularly with enlightened Italy, there must have been many composed with sufficient ability to entitle Spain to a distinguished rank amongst those nations who have reflected most splendour upon literature. Nevertheless, if there have existed, particularly in later times, learned foreigners who have given a just account of Spanish writings, there have also been many others who have painted them in very different colours. The deplorable state of Spanish literature during the third epoch, is one of the principal causes of the bad opinion which many have entertained, and do

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\* These mental qualities of the Spaniards are admitted by foreigners, amongst whom I will cite La Martinière, *Grand Diction.*; *Art. Espagne*, Moreri; also, *Art. Espagne*, Hermilly, Veyrac, &c. But the proofs of their vivacity and acuteness must be sought for amongst illiterate and ignorant people, from whose lips issue spontaneously the witty and humourous sallies that are admired in Cervantes, Quevedo, Gracian, Isla, and other writers. Upon the genius of the Spaniards, and the influence of the climate, *Capmany's Teatro Crit.* Tomo I. and *Masdeu's Hist. Crit. de Esp.* Tomo. I. are worthy of perusal.



still entertain, respecting it; for they only regard it in this limited aspect, without considering the great writers whom Spain produced previous to the decline of letters, and the efforts which she made after their restoration. Moreover, when the motives ceased which rendered the study of the Castilian language general, it began to be wholly neglected, or to be studied only for commercial purposes, which do not require an intimate acquaintance with the literary treasures of a nation; Spanish books, which were before an object of extensive commerce, were no longer printed in foreign countries, or imported from Spain; and as students in that language made use of very few, and those almost always the same, this might have given rise to the prevalent opinion that the Spaniards possess few literary productions; or, according to the judgment of a celebrated writer,\* that they have produced no more than one good work, which is Don Quixote.

The language and literature of Spain having been formed under peculiar circumstances, possess certain features which distinguish them from those of other nations. The peculiarities

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\* The author of *Lettres Persannes*.



hence arising, joined to the great difficulty of comprehending equivoques, jests and proverbs, with which the Spanish Comedies, Novels, and works of a similar nature abound, has occasioned many to condemn that which they could not understand, or which appeared different from what they were accustomed to admire. He who pays attention to these reflections, and considers the obstacles which Spain has encountered, arising both from her continual domestic and foreign wars, and from the considerable diminution in her population subsequent to the seventeenth century, will find that this nation has not been, as many believe, tardy in administering to the progress of human knowledge.



OBSERVATIONS UPON HISTORY, NOVELS AND  
POETRY, AND A LIST OF THE AUTHORS  
WHO HAVE WRITTEN WITH THE GREATEST  
SUCCESS IN THESE DEPARTMENTS OF SPA-  
NISH LITERATURE.

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HISTORY.

THE number of the Spanish historians is prodigious. According to the testimony of a French writer, Spain can enumerate more historians, chronologists and geographers, than any other nation in Europe, the number of those alone who have treated on subjects relating to their own nation amounting to more than 500.\*

The chief points to be attended to in such productions are *veracity* and *style*. With

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\* *De Veyrac Hist. des Revolutions d'Espagne*, quoted by d'Hermilly, p. 16.



respect to the first, it is true that the accounts of the primitive periods of Spanish history, equally with those of other countries, are involved in uncertain and fabulous relations; but the annals of less remote times are in general written with a veracity that does honour to the nation. The Spanish historical works are almost the only sources from whence information can be derived relative to the events that occurred during the conquest of the different nations of America, many of the most celebrated writers on this subject having been eye-witnesses of the facts which they describe. Moreover, the circumstance of their not having concealed or disguised those occurrences which reflected least honour upon their countrymen, is a sufficient proof of their veracity. The accuracy of many of these writers is allowed by Robertson, a very competent judge of the question, as well as by several other impartial authorities.\*

With respect to style, which is the second labour of the historian, it should be serious

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\* Prevost *Hist. Générale des Voyages*, Tom. I. *Avertissement du Traducteur*; Robertson's *History of Charles the Fifth*, and *History of America*.



and dignified. Dignity of character is a qualification which has never been denied to the Spanish nation, and which being reflected in its writings, bestows upon them this most important requisite. Moreri says the Spanish historians have generally written with considerable elegance and great purity of style; an eulogium confirmed by Robertson and others.

I shall add to these observations upon history, a list of the writers who have adorned this branch of literature, merely premising what is equally applicable to the other branches, that I have confined myself to the writers of the sixteenth and following centuries, not because I consider those who preceded them as inferior in merit, but because having flourished at a period when the language had not attained its perfection, they cannot be recommended to the attention of the student. I would also remark, that, although I only mention some of those writers, I do not mean to insinuate that those whose names I have omitted are unworthy of regard, but a list of the whole would far exceed my limits, and I think I have mentioned a sufficient number for the instruction of students; persons, however, who desire more extensive information,



are referred to the works which I have quoted, and shall quote in the course of this Essay.\*

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\* I recommend to the attention of amateurs of the History of Spain, the *Historia Critica de España* of Don Juan Francisco de Masdeu, one of the most celebrated modern Spanish writers, who in our times has combated many superstitious opinions of former ages, and has bequeathed to posterity a work, comprising the results of deep and laborious research. I have much pleasure in rendering this homage to the learning and talents of Masdeu, to whom I am personally indebted for my predilection for literature.



## HISTORICAL WORKS.

[N. B. In this and other enumerations of the names of authors which will be found in the course of this work, I have placed most of them in the order wherein the first editions of their works appeared, as far as I have been able to trace them.]

Fr. Antonio de Guevara, *Vida de Julio Cesar, de Trajano, Adriano y de otros Emperadores Romanos.*

Florian de Ocampo, *Cronica General de España.*

Luis de Avila y Zuñiga, *Comentarios de las Guerras del Emperador Carlos V. en Alemania.*

Francisco Lopez de Gomara, *Historia general de las Indias—Descripcion de todas las Indias.*

Pedro de Alcocer, *Historia ó Descripcion de la Imperial Ciudad de Toledo—Historia de los Godos.*

Agustin de Zarate, *Historia del Descubrimiento y Conquista del Perú.*

Geronimo de Zurita, *Anales de la Corona del Reyno de Aragon y otros escritos.*



Bernal Diaz del Castillo, *La Historia verdadera de la Conquista de Nueva España*.\*

Estevan de Garibay, *Compendio historial de las Cronicas de España*.

Luis del Marmol, *La Descripcion general de Africa—Historia de la Rebelion y Castigo de los Moriscos del Reyno de Granada*.

Ambrosio de Morales, *Continuacion de la Cronica General de España del Maestro Florian de Ocampo, y otras obras*.

P. Juan Gonzalez de Mendoza, *Historia de las cosas mas notables de la China*.

Geronimo de Blancas, *Comentarios de Aragon*.

Juan Castellanos, *Varones ilustres de India*.

Joseph de Acosta, *Historia natural y moral de las Indias*.

P. Juan de Mariana, *Historia general de España*.†

\* I quote this author rather on account of the authenticity of his statements, than for the elegance of his style. See the opinion of Robertson, on Bernal Diaz del Castillo, in his *Hist. of America*, Vol. II. Note 1st.

† Various writers have published comments upon P. Mariana, one of the most learned historians of his time, whose work is well known to men of letters, both



Bernardino de Mendoza, *Comentario de lo sucedido en los Payses Baxos desde 1567, hasta 1577.*

D. Antonio de Fuenmayor, *Vida de Pio Quinto.*

Fr. Joseph de Siguenza, *Vida de S. Geronimo.*

Fr. Prudencio de Sandoval, *Vida y Hechos del Emperador Carlos V.—Historia del Rey Don Fernando el Magno, y otros.*

Inca Garcilaso, *Comentarios Reales del Perú —Historia de la Florida.*

Fr. Antonio de Yepes, *Historia de la Orden de S. Benito.*

D. Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, *Guerra de Granada.*

Gaspar Escolano, *Historia de Valencia.*

Martin de Roa, *Vida de Doña Sancha Carrillo—Santos de Cordoba, Sevilla y otras ciudades.*

Fr. Juan de Torquemada, *Monarquia Indiana.*

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of his own and foreign countries. Amongst the number who have treated on Mariana's history, I should particularly distinguish the remarks of the Marques de Mondejar, a writer in high repute among the literati of his nation.



Jayme Bleda, *Chronologia de los Moros de España.*

Luis Cabrera de Cordoba, *Historia de Felipe II.—Tratado de Historia.*

D. Francisco de Moncada, *Expedicion de Catalanes y Aragoneses contra Turcos y Griegos.*

Antonio de Herrera, *Comentario de los Hechos de los Españoles, Franceses y Venecianos en Italia y de otras Republicas y Potentados desde 1281, hasta 1559—Historia general de Indias, y otras obras.*

D. Carlos Coloma, *Las Guerras de los Estados Baxos desde 1588, hasta 1599.—Las Obras de Cayo Cornelio Tacito.*

D. Lorenzo Vander Hammen, *Historia de Don Juan de Austria, y otras obras.*

D. Pablo de Espinosa, *Historia de Sevilla—Epitome de la Vida del Santo Rey Don Fernando.*

Bartolomé Leonardo de Argensola, *Continuacion de los Anales de Aragon de Geronimo Zurita—Conquista de las Molucas.*

Diego de Colmenares, *Historia de Segobia y Compendio de la Historia de Castilla.*

D. Diego de Saavedra Faxardo, *Corona Gotica.*



Alonso de Ovalle, *Historia del Reyno de Chile*.

D. Francisco de Quevedo, *Vida de Marco Bruto*.

D. Diego Ortiz de Zuñiga, *Anales Ecclesiasticos y Seculares de Sevilla*.

Fr. Domingo Navarrete, *Tratados historicos, politicos, &c. de la China*.

Pedro de Abarca, *Los Reyes de Aragon en Anales historicos*.

D. Antonio de Solis, *Conquista de Mexico*.

Gumilla, *Historia del Rio Orinoco*.

Marques de S. Felipe, *Comentarios de la Guerra de España, é Hist. de Felipe V*.

Campomanes, *Historia de los Templarios*.

Don Eugenio Llaguno, *Cronicas*.

Don Antonio Capmany, *Memorias historicas sobre la Marina, Comercio y Artes de la antigua Ciudad de Barcelona*. \*—*Questiones sobre varios Puntos de Historia*.

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\* "The various and interesting information which he so appositely brings forward, unites the History of Barcelona with that of almost all Europe, and renders it of great importance to all curious and erudite readers." Andres, *Origen, &c. de toda la Literatura*. Tomo VI. p. 209.



Malo De Luque, *Historia Politica de los Establecimientos Ultramarinos*.\*

Don Ignacio Lopez de Ayala, *Historia de Gibraltar*.

Muñoz, *Historia del nuevo Mundo*.†

Salustio, *La Conjuracion de Catilina y la Guerra de Jugurta, por el Infante Don Gabriel, con notas y disertacion sobre el Alfabeto y Langua de los Fenicios y sus Colonias*.

\* The Duke of Almodovar is the true author of this history, which, in the opinion of an impartial French writer, is superior to that of Raynal for judicious reflections, style and opinions. *Essai sur la Litterature Espagnole*, Paris, 1810.

† The merit of this work causes us to regret that it has not been continued.



## OBSERVATIONS ON SPANISH NOVELS.

THE Spaniards have been much celebrated for the excellence of their novels. The most ancient productions of this nature in the modern languages are those of chivalry, which are generally thought to have been derived from the Arabs, and introduced into Europe through the medium of the Spaniards and Portuguese. The earliest and most celebrated of these books of chivalry seem to have been, first the one attributed to the famous Turpin, written, according to the opinion of the French writer Pedro de Marca, by a Spaniard\* about the tenth century; secondly, Amadis de Gaula, and thirdly, Palmerin of England; the two last being in the judgment of Quadrio, the best of that species. These books full of enchantments, amours, duels, travels through desert spots, &c. were soon circulated in England, France and Italy, and were multiplied without

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\* Marca quoted by Masdeu, Tom. I. p. 193. See also Andres, Tom. II. Cap. xi. p. 80.



end, until the immortal Cervantes banished them from the realms of literature, by ridiculing in his *Don Quixote* the extravagance and absurdities with which they abound, and for which they were read with so much avidity.

These were succeeded by pastorals, of which I shall presently treat, and those tales termed *picarescas*, a natural and ingenious style of novel writing, which described the actions of life with great truth, not as they are exemplified by kings and nobles, but by the practice of vagabonds and men in the lowest ranks of society. Such are *El Lazarillo de Tormes*, of Don Diego de Mendoza; *Guzman de Alfarache*, *La Vida del gran Tacaño*, by Quevedo; *Alonso Mozo de muchos Amos*, or the Servant with many Masters, and several others. But the *Life of Guzman de Alfarache*, (the Spanish Rogue), written by Aleman, in the sixteenth century, deserves a particular mention among the novels of this nature, which have been imitated so successfully by Le Sage, in his *Gil Blas*, and by the English novelists Fielding and Smollet. The style of this work is excellent, while the incidents are original and interesting, and are arranged in the most judicious and natural manner.



The other species of Spanish novels are the pastoral romances, of which, although they are very generally dispersed through Spain and other countries, only two have been preserved, viz. the *Diana* of Jorge de Montemayor and the novel of the same name, by Gil Polo. The *Diana Enamorada* of Gil Polo, in the opinion of Cervantes, was as worthy of preservation as if it had been written by Apollo himself.\* It does, indeed, contain a great variety of natural incidents, and is written both in verse and prose, in a very pleasing and elegant style.

To these fictions must be added, the most celebrated of all which I have yet spoken of, that is *Don Quixote de la Mancha*. The merits of this work are so well known that it is unnecessary to mention them here. Nevertheless, I will add, to what has been said upon the subject, that many of its beauties still remain to be discovered, since it must be supposed that the object of Cervantes was not merely to criticise books of chivalry, but that he also had in view the manners of his time, which he did not dare to describe more openly.

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\* *Don Quixote*, Part I. Cap. vi.



If we had the key to these secrets, the excellence of this work would be much more apparent. Cervantes likewise composed the *Novelas exemplares* (Moral Novels), two novels entitled *Galatea*, and *Los Trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda*, also a poem called *El Viage al Parnaso*, (The Journey to Parnassus): but these latter productions are inferior in merit to his *Don Quixote* and *Novelas exemplares*. He also wrote several dramatic pieces, which are noticed in my account of the drama. The novels of Boccacio and Cervantes are the best of this sort that were ever written; both contain descriptions of certain adventures and accidents in the lives of the authors; both are correct and faithful portraits of the manners of men in general, and those of the times in which they lived in particular; with this difference, that the novels of Cervantes do not dishonour their title of moral. Moreover, the style of Cervantes is exempt from the defects which Denina\* and other critics have pointed out in the *Italian Novelist*. The English possess several good imitations of *Don Quixote*, but the best ever executed is the *Fray Gerundio*, or Friar Gerund, of Father Isla; in which the author's object is to ridicule bad preachers,

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\* Denina, *Vicende della Letteratura*. Cap. iv.



and to censure the abuses introduced into the pulpit. The lively and fruitful imagination of this witty writer, has thrown together in this novel so many different and entertaining incidents, and his erudition and critical knowledge enabled him to ridicule with so much pleasantry several ludicrous and absurd systems, that his work excites the admiration of foreigners equally with that of his own countrymen, and has been translated into the English and other languages.

*El Diablo Cojuelo*, (The Devil upon two Sticks), by Luis de Guevara, is another of these Spanish satirical novels; of this work I shall say nothing, as it is already well known from the imitation of Le Sage, the only person who appears to have caught the happy conception of Guevara.



## NOVELS AND OTHER WORKS OF IMAGINATION.

Hurtado de Mendoza, *El Lazarillo de Tormes*.

Jorge de Montemayor, *La Diana*.

Gaspar Gil Polo, *Diana enamorada*.

Juan de Timoneda, *El Patrañuelo y otras obras*.

Luis Galvez de Montalbo, *El Pastor de Filida*.

Agustin de Roxas, *Viage entretenido*.

Mateo Aleman, *Vida del Picaro Guzman de Alfarache*.

Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *Don Quixote de la Mancha*—*Novelas exemplares*—*La Galatea*—*Trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda*.

Francisco de Ubeda, *La Picara Justina*.

Christoval Suarez de Figueroa, *La Constante Amarilis*.

Alonso Fernandez de Avellaneda, *Segunda parte de Don Quixote de la Mancha*.

Vicente Espinel, *Vida del Escudero Marcos de Obregon*.



Vida de Estevanillo Gonzalez, Hombre de buen humor.

Alonso Salas Barbadillo, *El sutil Cordobes Pedro de Urdemalas*.

Geronimo de Alcalá Jañez, *Alonso Mozo de muchos Amos*.

Alonso del Castillo Solorzono, *Jornadas alegres, Tardes entretenidas y otras obras*.

Gonzalo de Cespedes, *Varia Fortuna del Soldado Pindaro*.

D. Francisco de Quevedo Villegas, *Los Sueños, Vida del Gran Tacaño y otras obras*.

Lucas Fernandez Piedrahita, *Guerras civiles de Granada*.

Gabriel Tellez, alias Tirso de Molina, *Deleytar aprovechando*.

Maria de Zayas, *Novelas amorosas y exemplares*.

Luis Velez de Guevara, *El Diablo Cojuelo, Novela de la otra Vida*.

Christoval Lozano, *Soledades de la Vida y Desengaños del Mundo, Novelas exemplares*.

Antonio Sanchez Tortoles, *El Entretenido, repartido en catorce noches de Invierno*.

P. Isla, *Historia del famoso Predicador Fray Gerundio*.



## OBSERVATIONS ON ELOQUENCE.

THERE are two principal classes of eloquence, viz. forensic and sacred. It has been a matter of discussion among the learned what form of government is most favourable to letters; and although the question is difficult to decide, since we observe that great men in every branch of knowledge have flourished both in republics and monarchical governments; yet I am of opinion, that as eloquence requires a theatre to debate in and auditors to listen, republican or popular governments are best fitted to favour the progress of this art. It was before the multitude that Demosthenes displayed the force of his arguments in Athens; at one moment defending his cause against Æschines, in that celebrated harangue which is considered the masterpiece of Greek eloquence, and at another warning his countrymen of the ambitious views of Philip, who was endeavouring to subjugate Greece. In Rome, from the rostra, and in the senate Cicero unfolded the irresistible power of his eloquence either in favour of injured innocence,



or to free the subject provinces from oppression, or else to reproach Cataline with his odious attempts to enslave the republic.

The debates in the English parliament have elicited the talents of a Pitt, a Fox, a Burke, a Windham and a Sheridan, and are continually producing men, whose orations may be considered as models of eloquence.

France, although subject to a monarchical government, had a parliament in which many celebrated men displayed talent in the art of oratory ; but, as Andres observes, their harangues never becoming enlivened or inflamed during the debate, as is the case under popular governments, were languid and inanimate, and could not reach that power of language which we admire in the ancients, and which the English promise to attain. The Spaniards having had few opportunities of speaking in public on civil and political subjects, have not produced many orators of note, whom otherwise they might have been expected to produce, when we reflect on the fertility of their imagination and their inclination to subjects, that require gravity and consideration.\*

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\* The Council of Trent and other Congresses for similar purposes yield proofs of this assertion, since the



Sacred eloquence has arrived at a greater height in Spain, since, without having been influenced by the circumstances which in other countries favour the progress of this kind of oratory, she can boast of having given birth to men of extraordinary talents for pulpit eloquence. In those ages in which new sects arise, and in countries where a diversity of religious sentiments is tolerated, novel opinions are started in matters of theology, and the founders or followers of the new sects are involved in continual controversy with their opponents, for the purpose of supporting their own tenets and refuting those of the adverse party. But in countries where there is but one religion there is no room for controversy, and the orators have no other subjects to employ their talents upon than religious truths, and moral maxims, the exposition of which requires a simple style of oratory, as the characteristic of truth, whose light shines steadily without external aid. Another impediment that sacred eloquence has encountered in Spain has been

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share which the President Covarrubias, Melchor Cano, and the learned Antonio Agustin, Archbishop of Tarragona, had in their discussions, is well known. The negotiations that were carried on during the time of Charles the Fifth and of other sovereigns, also testify the same.



the Latin language, since those theological writers who possessed the greatest genius, and might have enriched their native tongue, have composed many of their works in that language; and on this head Oliva, Father Luis de Leon and others, utter frequent complaints.

Among the sacred orators and religious writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, we may distinguish Don Antonio de Guevara, preacher and historiographer to Charles the Fifth; Juan de Avila, styled the apostle of Andalusia and master by excellence; Father Luis de Granada, whose writings, among other qualities of elocution, display perspicuity, simplicity and propriety of style, sublimity of imagery, pathos and power of description, and other characteristics of a great orator. The Castilian language is much indebted to Fathers Avila and Granada, since, as has been observed by Capmany, the former created a mystical phraseology of forcible and sublime expressions, and the latter beautified it, gave it volume, fluency and dignity, without rendering it pompous or affected. Amongst other orators of the Augustan æra, I may cite Father Diego de Estella, preacher to Philip the Second; Father Pedro Malon de Chaide; Father Joseph de Sigüenza, another of Philip



the Second's preachers, whose severity he moderated by the efficacy and spirit of his discourses;\* Father Juan Marquez and others, who live in vivid remembrance in the minds of men, and whose merit may be estimated by the works they have left behind them, on moral and religious subjects, as well as other productions written in the same spirit, to all of which I would refer every lover of the language, for models of style and specimens of the purest elocution.

To this list I may add the names of Bocanegra, Xaramillo, Bertran, Clement and Tavira, who, by their pastoral letters, their zeal and their example in the last century, restored correct taste to the pulpit, and destroyed the abuses that had been introduced to the great detriment of eloquence as well as of religion.

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\* Capmany.



## RELIGIOUS AND MORAL WORKS.

Alonso Rodriguez, *Exercicios de Perfeccion.*

Santa Teresa de Jesus, *Camino de Perfeccion,*  
*Cartas con las notas de Palafox y otras obras.*

Fr. Luis de Granada, *Guia de Pecadores,*  
*Meditaciones y otras obras.*

Juan de Avila, *Las Obras.*

Fr. Luis de Leon, *La perfecta Casada.*

Pedro de Rivadeneyra, *Tratado de la Religion,*  
*Vida de los Santos y otras obras.*

Sanchez de las Brozas, *Doctrina del Estoico*  
*Filosofo Epicteto.*

Fr. Luis de la Puente, *Meditaciones y otras*  
*obras.*

Fr. Juan Marquez, *El Gobernador Chris-*  
*tiano.*

Christoval de Fonseca, *Sermones y otras*  
*obras.*

P. Juan Eusebio Nieremberg, *Las obras.*

D. Juan de Palafox, *Cartas Pastorales y*  
*otras obras.*



EPISTLES, WORKS OF CRITICISM,  
MISCELLANIES.

Doña Maria Oliva Sabuco, *Nueva Filosofia de la Naturaleza del hombre y otras obras.*\*

Fr. Antonio de Guevara, *Epistolas familiares. Menosprecio de la Corte y Alabanza de la Aldea y otras obras.*

Francisco Cervantes de Salazar, *Las Obras.*

Lucas Gracian Dantisco, *El Galateo Español.*

Antonio Perez, *Cartas á diferentes Personas.*

D. Diego de Saavedra Faxardo, *Empresas politicas—Republica Literaria.*

D. Juan de Zabaleta, *Obras.*

Gracian, *El Criticon.*

Feijoo, *Cartas eruditas, Teatro Critico Universal.*

\* To this celebrated female who flourished in the sixteenth century, the discovery of the nervous fluid is attributed.



Cadalso, *Cartas Marruecas, Los Eruditos á la Violeta y otras obras*.\*

Mayans, *Cartas Morales, Civiles, Literarias de varios Españoles recogidas por Don Gregorio Mayans*.

Asso, *Cartas eruditas de algunos Literatos Españoles, publicadas con el nombre de D. Melchor de Asagra*.

D. Pedro Rodriguez Campomanes, *Discurso sobre el Fomento de la Industria popular*—Dis-

\* Don José Cadalso holds a distinguished rank amongst the authors of the reign of Charles the Third, for his writings have greatly contributed to maintain good taste and sound literature. His work entitled *los Eruditos á la Violeta*, is a course of all the sciences taught in a week, and his *Annals of Five Days* are a humorous censure of the frivolity and pedantry of our age. In his *Cartas Marruecas* he has pointed out the ridiculous nature of many abuses which he has contributed to destroy; this work both in design and execution is far superior to the *Persian Letters*, which, according to Denina, *Vicende della Letteratura*, Cap. ix. only please because men of free opinions are delighted to have it in their power to utter in the language of others, sentiments conformable to their mode of thinking. Cadalso after having enlightened his country by many erudite works, sacrificed his life in its cause at the siege of Gibraltar.



*curso sobre la Educacion popular de los Artesanos.\**

D. Melchor de Jovellanos, *Ley Agraria y otras obras.*

P. Isla, *Cartas familiares—Rebusco de sus obras—Cartas de Juan de la Encina.*

\* See the eulogium on this writer, by Robertson, *Hist. of America*, Vol. II. Note 97.



## GRAMMARS AND OTHER WORKS ON THE SPANISH LANGUAGE.

Antonio de Nebrixa, *Gramatica Castellana*.

Ambrosio de Morales, *Discurso sobre la Lengua Castellana*.

Bartolomé Ximenez Paton, *Eloqüencia Española*.

Bernardo de Aldrete, *Origen de la Lengua Castellana*.

Sebastian de Covarrubias, *Tesoro de la Lengua Castellana*.

Gonzalo Correa, *Gramatica Trilingue*.

Anonimo, *Dialogo de las Lenguas*.

Real Academia Española, *Diccionario de la Lengua Castellana*, 6 Tom.—*Compendio en un Tomo*—*Gramatica de la Lengua Castellana*—*Ortografia de la Lengua Castellana*.

Garces, *Fundamento del Vigor y Elegancia de la Lengua Castellana*.

Capmany, *Teatro Critico de la Eloqüencia Española*—*Filosofia de la Eloqüencia*.

Huerta, *Examen de la posibilidad de fixar la significacion de los Sinonimos de la Lengua Castellana*.



## POETRY.

EVERY species of poetry or composition in verse, may be reduced to three classes, viz. lyric, epic and dramatic.

### LYRIC POETRY.

The ancients gave the denomination of lyric poems to all compositions which could be sung with the accompaniment of the lyre. Spanish poetry possesses more metres or forms of verse than that of any other nation, since, in addition to its ancient Castilian versification,\* it has admitted the major part of the forms used by the Italians. But the original Spanish metres† are so beautiful, and so well adapted

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\* An enumeration and explanation of the several metres used by the Spaniards, will be found at the end of this Essay.

† “ Although the English are remarkable for the number and variety of their ancient ballads, and retain perhaps a greater fondness for these old simple rhapsodies



to every species of composition, that notwithstanding the introduction of the Italian versification, they have been preserved until our times.

The Italian hendecasyllables, or verses of eleven syllables, were first introduced by Boscan, Garcilaso, Mendoza and others, who during the sixteenth century travelled into Italy. This novelty met with many opponents, the chief of whom was Castillejo, secretary to the Emperor Ferdinand, who, says Luzan, may be styled the prince of the poets that used the ancient versification; but notwithstanding this opposition, the Spanish Parnassus was considerably enriched by the adoption of these new forms of verse.

The number of poets who have adorned the muses of Spain since the commencement of the sixteenth century is so considerable,

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of their ancestors than most other nations; they are not the only people who have distinguished themselves by compositions of this kind. The Spaniards have multitudes of them, and many of the highest merit; they call them romances. Most of them relate to their conflicts with the Moors, and display a spirit of gallantry peculiar to that romantic people."

Bishop Percy.



that, not to infringe on the limits which I have prescribed to myself in this Essay, I shall only notice the most celebrated.

Boscan, whom I have mentioned above, is the author of an *Imitation of Hero and Leander*, and of several other pieces. He was the friend of Garcilaso and of Mendoza.

Garcilaso de la Vega left only a small number of lyric poems, which have served as models to his successors. The most esteemed among these is the *Eclogue*, which begins thus: *El dulce lamentar de dos Pastores*, in which this elegant poet describes the lamentations of two shepherds. This piece has been translated into Italian, both by Mr. Conti and the Abbé Masdeu, and may rank with the very best eclogues. The other poetical productions of Garcilaso consist of some *Elegies*, together with some *Songs* and *Sonnets* in the taste of Petrarch.\*

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\* Garcilaso, whom foreigners have styled the Spanish Petrarch, was mortally wounded whilst scaling a tower, and died at the age of 33.

There are two commentaries on his poems, one written by Fernando de Herrera, and the other by Sanchez de



Fernando de Herrera composed many *Odes* and other pieces, which obtained him the surname of divine, on account of the noble enthusiasm and species of inspiration with which he was animated, and which is visible in his verses, particularly in his *Ode* to Don John of Austria, and that upon the battle of *Lepanto*.

Don Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, author of the *History of the War in Granada*, and of the novel called *Lazarillo de Tormes*, composed, among other poems, some *Epistles* which will bear a comparison with those of Horace.

Father Luis de Leon, one of the most learned men of his time, not satisfied with having enriched Spanish poetry with several very beautiful productions, left behind him some models of translation in the *Songs of Solomon*, the *Book of Job*, many pieces of Horace, &c. &c. The style of his *Sacred Odes* is consistent with the majesty of the subject. One of his most beautiful pieces is the *Pro-*

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las Brozas. Sanchez likewise wrote the *Life of Garcilaso*. Don Nicolas de Azara, the elegant translator of Middleton's *Life of Cicero*, has also illustrated Garcilaso.



*phhecy of the Tagus*, which closely resembles Horace's *Prophecy of Nereus*, but is considered superior to the *Latin Ode* in poetical merit.

The Spanish poet describes the River Tagus raising his head above its waters, and beholding Don Rodrigo, the last of the Gothic kings with the beautiful Cava, abandoned to the delights of love; he menaces the king, and declares all the evils which await him with the invasion of the Moors. The ode in which Father Leon describes his eager desire to ascend to heaven, possesses no less merit. These two odes have been translated into Italian by the Abbé Masdeu.\*

Francisco de la Torre. This author, whose origin is unknown, is one of those poets who, generally founding the subject of their verses on the most simple objects in nature, have had the ability to describe them with truth and elegance.

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\* Father Luis de Leon was thrown into prison for his translation of some of the sacred volume, at that time prohibited. Five years after he was set at liberty, he resumed the Professor's chair, and when his auditors expected to hear him utter complaints, he commenced his discourse as follows: "Hesterna die dicebam," (as I was saying yesterday,) an exordium that evinced his greatness of soul which his sufferings had not diminished.



The *Argensolas*. Besides some works in prose, as the *Conquest of the Moluccas*, the continuation of the *Annals of Zurita*, we are indebted to the brothers Leonardo and Bartolomé de Argensola, whom their countrymen have denominated the Spanish Horatii, for a considerable number of *Satires*, *Epistles* and others pieces, which have secured them a distinguished rank among the best poets of their nation.

Villegas, the Spanish Anacreon, had the art of adorning his amorous *Poems* with sentiments so delicate, with images so spirited and lively, with a style so tender, and a versification so harmonious, that, in the opinion of the Abbot Andres, he is far superior to all the modern Anacreons who have attempted that species of poetry.

An anonymous English writer of great elegance, has echoed this sentiment when speaking of the Sapphic verses of this poet, beginning *Dulce vecino de la verde selva*.

Don Luis de Gongora, endowed with an elevated and sublime imagination, and every other quality which constitutes a great poet, disdaining to follow the steps of his prede-



cessors, invented a new mode of writing, called *Culteranismo* (purism), which had many partisans in Spain. However, the whole of his works are not infected with this false taste, since there are many of his lyric effusions which are worthy to be placed by the side of the best productions of other poets.

Quevedo, (Don Francisco de,) in his numerous works in prose and verse, not only displayed great information, but shewed that his wit and humour were not inferior to his knowledge; but he suffered himself sometimes to be led away by a false taste, and too often preferred tinsel to gold. It is principally in his *Romances* and *Letrillas*, which last have been so well imitated by Don José de Iglesias, and in his *Sonnets*, that Quevedo displayed his ingenuity and talent for pastoral writing.\*

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\* Quevedo was one of the most learned men of his time; he was thoroughly acquainted with the Hebrew and also with the languages of the classics, as is manifest from the translations that he published from the Greek and Latin. A perfect acquaintance with the Castilian language and the manners of the Spaniards, are requisite to comprehend the satirical works of this poet. Quevedo has been compared to Voltaire and Swift. If we con-



Other poets flourished before and subsequent to the authors I have named, who merit the attention of amateurs of the Castilian language; such are Acuña, Gutierre de Cetina, Pedro de Padilla, Cueva, Figueroa, Espinel, Luis Barahona de Soto, Jauregui (the elegant translator of Tasso's *Aminta*), the Prince of Esquilache and others, some of whom endeavoured to arrest the progress of the vitiated taste introduced by Gongora; but this glory was reserved for our own age. It is astonishing, indeed, to behold the Spanish genius, entranced for nearly a century, suddenly arising and exciting many learned men to restore to the poetry of their native country all the splendour which it appeared to have lost. The works of Luzan, particularly his *Art of Poetry*, and those of Cadalso, have been principally instrumental in re-establishing correct taste, and in bringing back the art of versification to its true principles.

The example of these authors has been followed by a great number of distinguished

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sider merely his wit and general information, a comparison with the first appears just; but if we take into consideration his style and the subjects upon which he treated, he is better assimilated to Swift.



poets, amongst whom we may notice Melendez, (the Garcilaso of our days;)\* Father Gonzalez † who indulging in the sweets of poetry amidst

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\* Don Juan de Melendez Valdés, has successfully cultivated different species of poetry. He is sublime in his *Odes upon the Divinity*, and upon moral and philosophical subjects, while he is pleasing and tender in his pastoral poems. *La gloria de las Artes, el deseo de gloria*, in which he describes the immortal chefs d'œuvres of Raphael, and of the most celebrated ancient and modern artists; his *Eclogue* in praise of a country life, which gained the prize of the Spanish Academy, are among the most excellent of his poems. Melendez has also composed a pastoral comedy, *Las bodas de Camacho el rico*.\* His works are held in high estimation in foreign countries, especially in Italy, and also in France, where this author is lately deceased.

† Father M. Diego Gonzalez, a poet of great tenderness, no less interesting on account of the sensibility displayed in his verses than estimable for the purity of his diction, and for his soft and harmonious versification. His natural modesty is the cause that only a small number of his poems are extant, and these were preserved by the care of a friend, to whom he delivered them previous to his death, with an injunction to burn them, as he considered they were incompatible with his profession. One of his most esteemed pieces is the pointed sally entitled *El Murcielago*, (the Bat).

\* See account of the Spanish drama.



the severer studies of his profession, has recalled la Torre to our remembrance ; Iglesias, whose lively muse has painted with so much grace the vices of his age ; \* Iriarte, † Samaniego, ‡ ingenious fabulists ; the two Moratins, who have enriched literature with a beautiful poem,

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\* The poems of Iglesias, full of attic salt, and written in the taste of the earlier Castilian poets, though sometimes rather licentious, are admired for the purity of their style, for the author being unacquainted both with the Italian and French languages, could not blend a foreign idiom with his native tongue, as others have done.

† Don Thomas de Iriarte has enriched literature with many excellent works, such as his poem on *Music*, and a translation of Horace's *Art of Poetry*, which deservedly obtained the approbation of Metastasio ; and many fables in which he has adopted the novel expedient of putting literary precepts into the mouths of animals. These fables may be recommended to learners, both on account of their purity of style, and the phrases of familiar conversation with which they abound.

‡ The fables of Samaniego are written with great simplicity, those natural graces that arise out of the subject, and appertain to compositions of this sort being every where perceptible. But the chief merit of Samaniego's fables is, that they are generally within the comprehension of children, for whose instruction they were composed.



entitled *Las Naves de Cortes destruidas*, (The Ships of Cortes destroyed,) and the Modern Theatre, with many of its best pieces; Cienfuegos, whose poetical excellence occasions us to regret his premature death, Count Noroña, Arriaza,\* Quintana and many others, whom the limits of this Essay will not allow me to name, and who have raised Spanish poetry to a level with that of other nations.

#### EPIC AND DIDACTIC POEMS.

The Spaniards possess several epic poems, of which the most distinguished are *La Araucana* of Ercilla; *Las Navas de Tolosa*; *El Bernardo* of Balbuena; *Las Lagrimas de Angelica*; *El Monserrate* of Virues, &c. The *Araucana*, of Ercilla, contains some very fine passages, among which is the speech of Colocolo, which Voltaire prefers to that of Nestor, in Homer. This poem is likewise estimable for the purity of its diction, and interesting as the author bore a part in the transactions

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\* Arriaza has been successful in many different styles. His poem on *Compassion* is translated into French and Italian. I recommend the perusal of his works to foreigners, for they are written with equal purity and taste.



he describes. His work may therefore be considered as an historical monument.

Of the *Bernardo*, of Balbuena, Andres observes, that if it were freed from some expressions and sentiments peculiar to the taste of that age, which however do not occur very frequently, it might be ranked among the best epic poems. It is, indeed, a poem of very extraordinary merit.

Of the poem entitled *Las Lagrimas de Angelica*, (The Tears of Angelica,) Luzan remarks, that had it been written anterior to the poem of Ariosto on that subject, he should have given it the preference; but whatever credit I may attach to Luzan's judgment, I doubt whether his opinion in this instance would be confirmed by other critics.

The Spaniards have likewise several didactic and burlesque poems: such are *El Arte nuevo*, *El Siglo de Oro*, by Lope de Vega; *La Selva militar y politica*, by Rebolledo, which contains the precepts of the Art of War and of Politics; the *Poem on Painting*, by Cespedes, which describes the rules and progress of the art from the most remote periods, with all the system and elegance that can be expected in a



work of this nature; the poem on *Music*, by Iriarte, which has been admired by all Europe, and translated both into English and Italian.

Of the burlesque poems, the most distinguished are the *Gatomachia*, of Lope de Vega, and the *Mosquea*, of Villaviciosa, the heroes of which are Cats and Flies. These singular poems contain many humorous incidents, and episodes at regular intervals in the arrangement of the story, written in a very fluent and harmonious style, and without taking into consideration their poetical merit, are remarkable for their purity of diction.



### DRAMATIC POETRY.

This species of poetry reached its zenith in Spain and England at the same time, the most celebrated of the Castilian dramatists being contemporary with Shakespeare and Ben Jonson. The Spanish theatre has served as a model to that of other nations, and particularly to the French, whose early dramatic writers, not content with imitating the Spaniards generally, also borrowed from them the subjects of many of their pieces.\*

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\* There are few French critics, even amongst those who have formed the least favourable judgment of Spanish literature, that deny this truth. See, besides others, l'Art. 65, for the month of June 1746, of *le Journal de Trévoux*, the Preface to the *Menteur* of Corneille, by Voltaire, &c. &c. The following are some of the pieces which the French have derived from the Spanish theatre: The famous tragedy of the *Cid*, is nothing more than an imitation of the *Cid* of Guillen de Castro; Tristan has taken his *Marianne* from the *Tetrarca de Jerusalem*; it is also affirmed that *Heraclius* is taken from Calderon. All the tragedies of the younger Corneille are translations or imitations of the Spanish. By the author's own avowal, *Le Menteur* is taken from *La verdad Sospechosa* by Alarcon; *El Desden con el Desden*, has furnished Moliere with the subject of his *Princesse d'Elide*. (V. Andres, Tom. II. Cap. xiv. pp. 312, 313.)



It appears from a very authentic document, that the performance of plays was in use during the thirteenth century, at which period, in consequence of the strenuous exertions of king Don Alphonso the Tenth, justly sur-named the Wise, the Spanish language and literature were rapidly advancing towards perfection. In the document I have just alluded to, viz. *ElCodigo de las siete Partidas*, it is ordained that *juegos de escarnios*, by which must be meant short satirical pieces similar to our interludes, should not be represented in religious habits.\* It would be a task equally difficult, unavailing and foreign to my purpose to attempt to trace the progress of the Spanish drama, in the interval between those remote times and the sixteenth century, the era in which this and other studies were advanced to their highest excellence. Without stopping, therefore, to inquire after the founders of the Spanish stage, I shall cite a few of the authors by whom it was adorned,

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\* Los clerigos e los otros omes non deuen fazer *juegos de escarnio* con habito de religion ; (and further on it is added,) qualquier que vestiere habitos de monges o de monja o de religioso (para fazer *escarnios* e juegos con ellos) deue ser echado de aquella villa o de aquel lugar donde lo fiziere á açotes.

Tit. vi. Ley. xxxvi. Part I.



annexing a brief notice of Lope de Vega and Calderon, with some others who subsequently embellished it with all the grace and sublimity of which it was susceptible.

The first dramatic writer of note is Juan de la Encina, author of an *Arte de trovar*, or Art of Castilian poetry, a man of superior genius and learning, whose compositions well deserved the applauses of his contemporaries: and that these were bestowed in no small profusion, is evident from the fact of his plays having been represented in the palace of the Catholic kings.

The same brilliant career was pursued by Bartolomé de Torres Naharro, who, in the commencement of the sixteenth century, composed the *Propaladia*, a work which, in addition to other poems, contains eight comedies, divided into five *jornadas* or acts, extolled by the learned author of the *Dialogue of Languages*.\* Torres Naharro was followed by Lope de Rueda, whom Cervantes styles a man

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\* This writer, speaking of Torres Naharro, observes, that he is pure, easy, jovial, full of humorous and familiar phrases, and that he has tolerably well preserved the unities of time and place, but has not kept up the decorum of the characters.



possessing great judgment, and a singular talent for representation ; by another Naharro, distinct from the preceding ; by Juan de la Cueva, author of fourteen pieces in four acts, and of a *Poética*, wherein he has explained the precepts of the art, and defended himself from the censures that were pronounced upon his writings ; by Captain Virues,\* who, according to the opinion of Lope de Vega, in *El Laurel de Apolo*, surpassed all his predecessors ; and by other writers endowed with the most copious fancy, fertile in imagining, and judicious in conducting incidents ; but who, notwithstanding all their talents and assiduity, did no more than raise the drama from its cradle, the glory of apparelling it in its richest and gayest robes, being reserved for the men who imparted lustre to the reign of

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\* Virues was the author of the poem named, *El Monserrate*, little known to foreigners, although highly deserving of their notice : he moreover composed several lyric poems which enrol his name amongst those of the best writers of his time ; also five tragedies, entitled, *La Gran Semiramis*, *La Cruel Casandra*, *Atila Furioso*, *La Infelice Marcela* and *Elisa Dido*, which, although inferior to other productions of a similar nature, contain many beautiful passages, and are remarkable for the purity of their diction.



Philip the Second, and to those of his immediate successors.

It may not be uninteresting to form a brief comparison between the Greek and Spanish stages, in which it will be seen that the dramatic art attained its climax in both countries in consequence of a similar impulse, and by a similar medium. In Greece, Dithyrambics, the lascivious and satirical effusions that were sung at the feasts of Bacchus, together with the rude sayings and vulgar jesting of the vintagers; and in Spain, Eclogues, or the colloquies of shepherds,\* suggested the idea of a regular drama. In the time of Susarion and Thespis, who amused the inhabitants of Attica with the embryos of comedy and tragedy, waggons and scaffolds served for a stage; the actors daubed their faces with a dye, or covered them with a linen mask. Æschylus and Sophocles, the successors of Thespis, were the first who recited their plays in

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\* Cervantes speaking of the comedies that were represented in the time of Lope de Rueda, says, "These comedies were conversations, like eclogues, between two or three shepherds and some shepherdess."

Prol. to his Comedies.



theatres, which were small and built of wood, with machinery and decorations suitable to the dignity of their art. The mask was perfected under their hands; the sound of trumpets, the roaring of thunder were then first heard, and the flashing of lightning for the first time displayed on the stage; the gods were seen to descend from the sky, the furies to dart from the infernal regions, and spirits to issue from their sepulchres.

The Athenians at length erected a theatre of stone, which, amongst other inconveniences, was without a roof, so that on a sudden shower of rain, the spectators were obliged to take shelter under the porticoes, or to seek refuge in the neighbouring buildings.

In Spain, before the days of Lope de Rueda and of the second Naharro, who flourished in the reign of Charles the Fifth, a platform fixed upon four benches served for a stage, and was garnished with an old blanket extended from one side to the other. The dresses consisted of some white skins, bordered with gilt leather. All the performers had false beards, until Naharro restricted this embellishment to the characters that required it. It appears that women did not tread the stage until a



very late period.\* Naharro introduced single combats, duels and battles into his comedies; caused the clouds to descend from the sky, imitated the noise of thunder, and astonished the eyes of the spectators with lightning and other illusions which were till then unknown. There were afterwards established at Madrid two fixed and regular theatres, called *Corrales* or *Patios de Comedias*, (Play-courts, play-yards); the place that was chosen for this purpose being the court-yard of some large house, covered in with tiles, beneath which was a stage fixed upon supporters and moveable decorations, which were the property of some individual who let them out for hire, and took them away the moment the performance was concluded.

Such was the state of the drama, when “ the prodigy of nature, the great Lope de Vega ap-

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\* I cannot ascertain the precise period at which they were introduced, but it appears from a stage direction in one of the plays of Cervantes, that it was before the time of that writer. (See *La Numancia de Cervantes*.) Phrynichus, a pupil of Thespis, first introduced a female part into the Greek theatre, but the Greeks would not suffer women to perform.



peared, who assumed the diadem of comedy and placed beneath his jurisdiction the players of his day."\* He was aided and imitated in the noble enterprise of elevating and improving the Spanish theatre by several men of genius, whose names are enumerated by Cervantes,† and principally by Calderon de la Barca, Moreto, Roxas, Solis and others, of whom I shall give a brief account.

### *Cervantes.*

Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, well known from his *Don Quixote*, composed several *entremeses*, interludes, and about twenty or thirty comedies, the titles of which are *El Trato de*

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\* These are the words of Cervantes in the *Prologue* to his comedies.

† Cervantes in the above-mentioned *Prologue*, eulogizes the labours of Doctor Ramon; the ingenious plots of the Licenciado Miguel Sanchez; the solidity of Doctor Mira de Mescua; the discretion of the Canon Tarrega; the harmony and suavity of Don Guillen de Castro; the wit of Aguilar; the comedies of Luis Velez de Guevara; those of D. Antonio de Galarza, and the amorous intrigues in those of Gaspar de Avila: but I know not if posterity has confirmed all the eulogiums of the author of *Don Quixote*.



*Argel, La Numancia, La Gran Turquesca, La Batalla Naval, La Jerusalem, La Amaranta ó la del Mayo, El Bosque Amoroso, La Unica y la Bizarra Arsinda, La Confusa, El Gallardo Español, La Casa de los Zelos, Los Baños de Argel, El Rufian Dichoso, La Gran Sultana, El Laberinto de Amor, La Entretenida, Pedro de Urdemalas,\* &c. &c.*

Cervantes boasts that he was the first who embodied in a dramatic representation, the imaginations and secret workings of the soul,† and brought forward images of morality on the stage, as well as the first who reduced the

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\* The eight last were written by Cervantes at a later period, and were printed at Madrid in the year 1615. *El Trato de Argel* and *Los Baños de Argel*, are interesting representations of the sufferings endured by the captives in that city, which the author himself had experienced during his captivity. *La Numancia* is founded on an historical fact, very honourable to the nation. The subject of *El Rufian Dichoso*, is similar to that of the first of Boccacio's *Tales*.

† When Cervantes published this vaunt, he could not have borne in mind an allegorical comedy composed by the Marques de Villena, one of the ornaments of literature in the reign of Juan the Second.



number of *jornadas* or acts to three,\* although this latter novelty is attributed to another person, by Lope de Vega, in the following lines:

Virues, that genius of deserved renown,  
 Into three acts first comedy curtailed,  
 Which crawled before on four like infants' feet.†

I shall here annex the judgments which some learned Spaniards have pronounced upon the comedies of Cervantes. Agreeably to what he himself tells us, they were not ill received by the public, since they ran their career, unchecked by hisses, hooting or disturbance, and without any showers of cucumbers or other missiles; but this is not proof sufficient that they possessed much merit. Don Gregorio de Mayans, a name well known in the *Commonwealth of Letters*, affirms that they are much superior to the earlier dramatic productions, with the exception of *La Celestina*.‡

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\* See the *Prologue* to his comedies.

† *El Capitan Virues, insigne ingenio,*  
*Puso en tres actos la comedia que antes*  
*Andaba en quatro como pies de Niño.*

*Arte Nuevo de hacer Comedias.*

‡ *Vida de Cervantes.* *La Celestina*, notwithstanding its bad moral, has been translated into several languages. The



Nasarre, author of the *Prologo* to the edition of 1749, and Don Ignacio de Luzan make a report not very favourable to them, with this difference, that the former endeavours to prove that Cervantes wrote them with the laudable design of ameliorating the art, by casting an air of ridicule over the abuses which then prevailed, in the same manner as he had exposed the absurdities that were read with such avidity in books of chivalry: whilst Luzan is of opinion that he only composed them to administer to his necessity, or else in consequence of the constant inclination he felt to rhyme.\* To me it appears, that the opinion of Nasarre is entitled to considerable attention. Cervantes in the conversation which he supposes to have passed between a canon of Toledo, and the curate, Pedro Pérez,† which, according to the

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author of the *Dialogue of Languages* says of it, that there is no book written in Castilian whose diction is more natural, more appropriate or more elegant, and Cervantes declares that this book would in his opinion be divine, if it better concealed its portion of humanity.

Libro en mi opinion divino, si esconderera mas lo humano (Don Quixote).

\* Luzan, *La Poética*, Lib. iii. Cap. 1.

† *Don Quixote*, Part I. Cap. 43.



above-named Mayans, is the happiest of all his writings, evinces his perfect acquaintance with the true principles of the art, and describes all the extravagances and absurdities which disgraced and disfigured it, suggesting at the same time the means of preventing or remedying them.\* It is not, therefore, credible, that a man of Cervantes' taste and judgment, whose whole study was devoted to the instruction of his countrymen, should fall into the same faults which he censured with so

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\* Cervantes also enumerates the defects in the comedies of his time, in the following verses of his *Pedro de Urdemalas*.

Y veran que no acaba en casamiento  
Cosa comun, y vista cien mil veces,  
Ni que parió la Dama esta jornada  
Y en otra tiene el Niño ya sus barbas,  
Y venga de sus padres cierta injuria,  
Y al fin viene á ser rey de cierto reyno  
Que no hay cosmografia que lo muestre.

And 'twill be seen it ends not, as is wont,  
In that stale finish of a play—a marriage;  
Nor is the Lady put to bed this act,  
And, now, behold! the Child has got a beard on;  
And from his parents he endures some wrong,  
And at the last becomes a king of realms  
Which no cosmography has ever dealt of.



much severity, without some inducement similar to that which Nasarre attributes to him. But all the comedies of Cervantes are not of the same standard, nor is Nasarre's remark applicable to all of them; *La Numancia* has met with much applause in foreign countries, and has been translated into German.

*Lope de Vega.*

Lope Felix de Vega Carpio, one of those singular geniuses whom nature produces from age to age,\* was born at Madrid, in the year 1562, of noble but poor parents. In his youth he followed a soldier's fortune, and was in the famous expedition against England, in consequence of which circumstance he composed *La Dragontea*, a species of satire upon Admiral Drake. He had two wives, and after the death of the second became a priest, and died at the age of 73.

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\* The learned author of the *Essai sur la Littérature Espagnole* says, "Ce fut en 1635 que s'éteignit cet homme étonnant, le génie le plus fécond et peut être le poète le plus heureux que la terre ait jamais enfanté." Rapin had said before him, "No man ever had a greater genius for comedies than Lope de Vega. He possessed fertility of wit, joined with great beauty of ideas, and wonderful readiness of conception."



Lope de Vega united in his own person every endowment which constitutes a great poet, and from his childhood shewed promise of his future excellence; since, at five years of age he could read Spanish and Latin, and at eleven he began to write for the stage.\* His facility of composition was so great, that four and twenty hours were sufficient time to him for the structure of the longest comedy.

Since more than five score in a day and night  
Passed from the Muses to the stage at once.†

LOPE.

There are attributed to him one thousand eight hundred comedies and four hundred *autos sacramentales*, which, together with his other poems, form a total of more than twenty millions of verses. But it is evident that this calculation is exaggerated, since it would be impossible for one man to write so much.‡

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\* See *El Arte nuevo*, wherein, speaking of the novelty which Virues introduced into his comedies, Lope says, "and I wrote the same at eleven and twelve years of age."

† Pues mas de ciento en horas veinte y quatro  
Pasaron de las Musas al teatro.

LOPE.

‡ See the calculation made by Lord Holland, in his able and judicious Dissertation upon Lope de Vega, to



His fame was the occasion that many productions of other poets were published in his name, in order to facilitate their sale, of which injustice he himself complains in the *Eclogue* to Claudio, wherein, speaking of his dramatical compositions, he says :

But avarice, Claudio, has so far prevailed  
That others' stage-plots in my name they print  
With numerous errors rife. \*

But various circumstances, of which I shall presently speak, prevented this great man from realizing the expectations that had been formed from the consideration of his extraordinary talents. The defects in his dramas are considerable, since he does not observe the unities of time or place ; he too frequently perverts and changes historical facts for the purpose of adapting them to his plots, and often puts in the mouths of shepherds or common and illi-

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which, as well as to another Essay of the same noble author upon Guillen de Castro, I refer those Englishmen who are desirous of possessing more circumstantial details of Lope and other Spanish writers.

\* Mas ha llegado, Claudio, la codicia  
A imprimir con mi nombre las agenas  
De mil errores llenas. LOPE.



terate people expressions that are not correspondent with their station, merely for the purpose of displaying his erudition. But these faults which are common to other writers, who are nevertheless the glory of foreign nations, are over-balanced by a still greater number of beauties and excellencies.

All Lope's works display a very fertile and pleasing genius, and are replete with expressions and sublime images admirably adapted to fascinate the minds of the spectators.\* His diction is pure and terse, his verses are soft, easy and harmonious. In a word, Lope de Vega may be compared to a delicious garden†

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\* In proof of this assertion may be alleged a fact related by Carducho: "I was once," says this author, "present in a theatre during the representation of a tragedy of Lope de Vega's, wherein the characters were so admirably drawn, with such energy of sentiment, such exact arrangement, such perfect portraiture, colouring and vivacity, that one of the spectators, hurried irresistibly along by his enthusiasm and warmth of feeling, became quite beside himself, and rose from his seat exclaiming with great vehemence against the cruel homicide who, as it appeared to him, was about to strangle an innocent lady."

† Vega signifies in Spanish a fertile plain. This author does not disgrace the name which chance bestowed upon him.



which is thick sown with every beautiful species of flowers; or in the words of Saavedra, to a rich auction, where each may choose the gems that strike his fancy, for he will find many.\* It is not then astonishing that with these qualities he should have attained so high a reputation, that in his time nothing was considered good which did not proceed from his pen. His fame also extended beyond the Spanish confines, since Urban the Eighth sent him the cross of a Knight of Malta, and a considerable number of Italian poets bewailed his death;† many of his dramatic works having been represented with great applause in Italy, and even within the walls of the seraglio at Constantinople.‡ His poverty, which first obliged him to write as many comedies as he could, and afterwards the honours with which he saw himself loaded, not his ignorance of the art, with the rules of which he was so thoroughly conversant, that

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\* *Republica Literaria.*

† About ninety Italian writers contributed to the funeral honours paid to Lope de Vega, in Italy. See the Index to the 21 vols. of the miscellaneous works of this author, printed by Sancha, 1776.

‡ See Pellicer in his notes to *Don Quixote*.



he composed a *Poética*, induced him to pursue a path that obtained for him so much credit and brought him so many advantages, preferring present glory to posthumous fame, which, as an Italian poet observes, is

Fra i morti dolce suono a chi non l'ode.

Among the dead a pleasing sound to him  
Who hears it not.

*Calderon de la Barca.*

D. Pedro Calderon de la Barca was born at Madrid, in the year 1601, of noble parents. The occurrences of his life are very similar to those of Lope de Vega. Both followed in their youth a military career, and consecrated the last years of their lives to religion; both gave early testimonies of their talents, since Lope, as has been related, began to write comedies for the stage at eleven or twelve years of age, and Calderon at fourteen. Both were the admiration of their contemporaries, with this difference, that Lope having lived in the reigns of the two Philips, the Second and Third, monarchs averse to theatrical entertainments, only obtained the applause of the public, whilst Calderon enjoyed the favour of the court and the protection of Philip the Fourth,



who used to divert himself with paying court to the Muses.\*

The comedies of Calderon are more regular than those of Lope de Vega, not because the art had greatly advanced in the short space of time that intervened between the two writers, or had been improved and ameliorated by the last writer; but Calderon having only composed a hundred and twenty comedies and tragedies, and about a hundred autos sacramentales, a number it must be confessed considerable, but at the same time very inferior to that of his predecessor's works, had more time to polish and perfect his dramas before they were exposed to public view.

In his comedies, which are of three sorts, viz. *de Teatro*, *Heroicas*, and *de Capa y Espada*, "he introduced," says Luzan, "repartees, ready wit, sudden attachments, night-rounds, clandestine entrances, strictness of honour, duelling, ladies that are haughty, yet at the same time of easy approach and always ready to cheat their fathers and brothers; in short,

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\* It is believed that Philip the Fourth composed those comedies which pass under the name of *Un Ingenio de esta corte*, (a man of letters of this court).



an exaggerated picture of the gallantry of the times. They contain," adds the same author, "the chief art of all, which is that of interesting the spectator or reader, and hurrying him on from scene to scene, not merely without weariness, but with an eager desire to witness the catastrophe, a most essential quality, which not many of the poets of other nations, who have been great observers of rules, can boast of possessing. That censure is not ill-founded," continues Luzan, "which attributes to him a want of variety in his subjects and characters; but in a writer who possesses the superior qualifications of Calderon and the fascination of his style, many faults may be excused and may be even noticed as evidences of skill; till another shall come, who, emulating his beauties, is free from his defects. As this has not yet been beheld amongst us, Calderon retains almost all his original fame; he has served and still serves as a model of excellence, and his comedies are the most available treasures of our theatres." \*

Some German critics consider Calderon as superior to all the dramatic authors who have written in the modern languages. Schlegel

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\* Luzan, *La Poética*, Lib. iii. Cap. 1.



calls him the poet by excellence, and amongst other eulogiums says, that his works are wrought up with consummate skill, and that no other dramatic writer has painted the passions and affections in such poetical colours.

*Moreto.*

Don Augustin de Moreto is the next in rank after Calderon, of the men of genius who adorned the reign of Philip the Fourth, a monarch who, being aware that letters and the arts thrive, and are sheltered beneath the shadow of a throne, favoured and promoted his efforts. Moreto possessed sufficient taste and discernment to distinguish and select true beauties from false ones, and knew better than other writers, the art of confining within the bounds of reason the flights of his ardent imagination. On this account many of his comedies from their agreeable and natural incidents, from the art with which the characters are varied, and from the style in which they are composed, obtain even at this day the same applauses which they elicited when their author first gave them to the stage.



*Tirso de Molina.*

The plays of Gabriel Tellez, a native of Madrid, and a lively and ingenious poet, are represented with applause in the Spanish theatres. The titles of this author's comedies are, *Palabras y Plumas*; *El Pretendiente al revés*; *El Arbol del mejor Fruto*; *La Villana de Vallecas*; *El Melancólico*; *El mayor Desengaño*; *La Gallega Mari-Hernandez*; *La Zelosa de si misma*; *Amar por razon de estado*, &c. Tellez was a friar of the order *de la merced*, and imagining that this indulgence in his favourite pursuit was foreign to his profession, disguised himself under the assumed name of Tirso de Molina, which was prefixed to the edition of his works published in 1635.

*Solis.*

D. Antonio de Solis, well known from his *History of the Conquest of Mexico*, is likewise one of the most distinguished Spanish dramatists. This writer was born a poet, as the flowers of poesy that are scattered even amongst his prose abundantly testify. In the year 1681, nine of his comedies were published, the



titles of which are, *Triunfos de Amor y Fortuna*, with a *lóa*\* and interludes; *Eurídice y Orfeo*; *El Amor al uso*; *El Alcázar del Secreto*; *Las Amazonas*; *El Doctor Carlino*; *Un Bobo hace ciento*, with a *lóa*; *La Gitanilla de Madrid*; *Amparar al Enemigo*. Upon these Mayans remarks, “that if they had been written in conformity with the rigorous precepts of the comic art, they would have obtained the entire approbation of the nicest judges; since they display much neatness of invention, and purity of style, grace without affectation, and a singularly skilful play upon words, together with some sharp equivoques according to the taste of those times.” Solis, undeceived in his estimation of the vanities of the world, became a priest. It is worthy of remark, that five of the most celebrated dramatic poets, viz. Lope de Vega, Calderon, Moreto, Tellez and Solis, consecrated a part of their lives to religion.

Besides the authors here mentioned, there were others in the same epoch whose comedies possess considerable merit. Those who attained the most celebrity, are, Don Francisco

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\* *Lóa* is a prelude or prologue, which is placed at the commencement of comedies and other dramatic pieces.



de Roxas, (author of *Don Bertran del Cigaral*,\*) Don Juan de la Hoz, Don Antonio de Zamora, Don Diego Ximenez de Enciso, and Don José de Cañizares, who helped to sustain the art which continued declining with greater rapidity every day.

### MODERN DRAMATIC AUTHORS.

#### *Moratin.*

Moratin, better known by his academical name Inarco Celenio, is one of the most celebrated European dramatists. He has enriched the modern Spanish theatre with *El Viejo y la Niña*, *El Baron*, *El Café*, *La Mogigata*, and some other pieces in high repute for their style and diction, and for their observance of the rules and precepts of the art. One entitled *El Café*, which is a judicious satire upon bad comedies, has been often printed in other countries. D. Tomas de Iriarte, author of the *Fabulas Literarias*, and

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\* This comedy is one of the Spanish plays translated by P. Corneille. Roxas was likewise the author of *Entre Bobos anda el Juego*, and other plays of superior merit.



of other poems of equal merit, has composed, as well as translated from the French, a few comedies which may be well recommended to the lovers of the language.

D. Melchor de Jovellanos has written, besides other works, a comedy entitled *El Delincuente honrado*, (The honest Criminal,) the plot of which is derived from a real event that occurred in a city of Spain. This piece has been translated into other languages, and has met with much applause among foreign nations.



## ON TRAGEDY AND OTHER SPECIES OF SPANISH DRAMAS.

THE number of tragedies composed by the Spaniards is not equivalent to that of their comedies, although the Castilian language possesses all the richness and majesty which compositions of this nature require. It is true that many dramas published under the title of comedies, on account of their sorrowful catastrophes, as well as from other circumstances, might be placed on the list of tragedies, in the same manner as many which bear this name are scarcely distinguishable from comedies.

The earliest tragedies on record are,\* *La Venganza de Agamemnon* and *Hecuba triste*,

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\* I do not here recapitulate the tragedies of Lope de Vega, Calderon, and other writers of the seventeenth century, having already noticed these writers.



written by Fernando Perez de Oliva, who flourished in the sixteenth century, and took for his models the *Electra* of Sophocles, and the *Hecuba* of Euripides; and *La Nice laureada* and *Nice lastimosa*, of Geronimo Bermudez, inferior to those of Oliva, the subject of which is the unfortunate fate of Ines de Castro. Cervantes mentions three tragedies, viz. *La Isabela*, *La Filis*, and *La Alexandra*, in which he says the precepts of the art are well observed, and adds, that they excited the astonishment and admiration of all who heard them, both learned and unlearned, gentle and simple. Amongst the tragedies written subsequently, the most celebrated are *El Cid*, composed by Guillen de Castro, which is remarkable as having been the original of the Cid of Corneille, *El Ataulfo* and *la Virginia*, by D. Augustin de Montiano, written in close observance of dramatic rules; *La Numancia destruida*, distinct from the *Numancia* of Cervantes; *El D. Sancho Garcia*, by Cadalso; *Atahualpa*, by D. Cristoval Maria Cortes: *La Raquel*, by D. Vicente Garcia de la Huerta, which is the one that has attained the most repute; *El Pelayo*, by Don Manuel José Quintana; and finally, *La Condesa de Castilla*, *La Zoraida*, and others, by Don Nicasio Alvarez Cienfuegos, estimable for the



purity of their diction, and the elevation of their sentiments and expressions.\*

Spanish comedies are of various classes, viz. those termed, *De Teatro*, (theatrical,) which require splendid decorations and frequent changes of scene; *Las Heroicas*, (heroical plays,) where the characters are kings and persons of high rank; those *De Capa y Espada*, (of cloak and sword,) so termed on account of the ancient Spanish costume worn by the *Dramatis Personæ*; and finally, the *Comedies de Figurón*, in which the actions of some absurd and ludicrous person are turned into ridicule.

Luzan praises some comedies of the latter class, which are, *La Tia y la Sobrina*, by Moreto; *Don Lucas del Cigarral*, by Roxas; *El Castigo de la Miseria*, by D. Juan de la Hoz;

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\* Several good translations of foreign tragedies have been made in the Spanish language, as that of *Cinna*, by the Marques de San Juan; that of *Britannicus*, by Don Juan Trigüeros; and that of *Athalie*, by Don Eugenio de Llaguno, which are justly eulogized by Luzan; those of *Bruto*, and other tragedies of *Alfieri*, by Don Antonio Saviñon; and those of *Virginia* and *Orestes*, by Solis. These two last are modern authors.



*Un Bobo hace ciento*, by Solis; *El Hechizado por Fuerza*, by D. Antonio de Zamora; and *El Domine Lucas*, by D. Josef de Cañizares.\*

There is also a species of dramas in use among the Spaniards, termed *Tragi-comedias*, (tragi-comedies,) the plot of which is for the most part founded upon some real occurrence. They take this name in consequence of the mixture of serious and humorous passages that

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\* To the four sorts of comedies above-mentioned may be added one more, which comprehends pastorals and eclogues. Eclogues, as Cervantes remarks, were the primitive dramas of the Spaniards, who need not yield in this respect to any other nation, their most excellent ancient and modern poets having exercised their talents in the style alluded to. The Italians bear the palm in pastoral comedies, witness *L'Aminta*, *Il Pastor Fido*, *La Fille*, and others: Jauregui has made so perfect a translation of the *Aminta*, that it might gain the approbation of the author of *La Gerusalemme*. Melendez has composed an original pastoral comedy, entitled, *Las Bodas de Camacho el rico*, founded upon one of the most ingenious episodes in *Don Quixote*. This production possesses another merit besides that of versification, which is, that the language of the characters is suited to the subject and to the station of the *dramatis personæ*, which cannot be said of the above-named Italian pastorals.



is to be found in them, and because the characters are composed both of persons of the highest and of the lowest order. Lope de Vega, in allusion to these compositions, says,

Tragic and comic in one mass united,  
And Terence joined to Seneca, tho' formed  
Even as another Minotaur, will make  
One portion grave, and ludicrous the other;  
And yet this medley yields a strange delight.  
Nature instructs us by her own example,  
Whose beauty springs from her variety.\*

Many writers have reprobated this union of serious and humorous subjects: without examining the arguments that may be advanced on both sides of the question, I shall only remark, that it is not of modern invention, as some believe, nor peculiar to the Spaniards, since it was prac-

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\* Lo tragico y lo comico mezclado,  
Y Terencio con Seneca, aunque sea  
Como otro Minotauro de Pasífae,  
Haran grave una parte, otra ridicula;  
Que aquesta variedad deleyta mucho.  
Buen exemplo nos da naturaleza  
Que por tal variedad tiene belleza.

*Arte Nuevo.*



tised by some of the poets who flourished after the time of Homer,\* and it is a style of representation very frequently exhibited in England.

*Autos Sacramentales*, to which we have previously alluded, are a species of composition in celebration of the mystery of the Eucharist, in which allegorical personages are introduced. The *Autos* which Calderon de la Barca wrote after his retirement from the world, are those which have met with the most applause. "This happy man," says the eloquent Schlegel, "after having passed through the labyrinth of doubt to the asylum of faith, contemplates and describes with an immoveable serenity of soul, the impetuous hurricanes that agitate the world, and solemnizes in his verses, with a degree of admiration and cheerfulness which appear ever new, the magnificence of the creation, and the wonders of nature and art. When he unites the most distant objects, such

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\* See, amongst other publications, *Les Mém. de l'Acad. des Belles Lettres*, Tome XVI. p. 260. The mixture of tragic and comic incidents is also observable in the works of Aristophanes.



as the stars and flowers, every metaphor displays the bond of union and relation which exists between the Creator and his works, and this enchanting harmony, this concert of the universe, are for him the image of eterna love."

In the time of Lope de Vega, *Zarzuelas* were introduced into Spain. These are compositions in two acts, partly musical; they were so called from having been first represented in *La Zarzuela*, a country-house belonging to Cardinal Infant Don Fernando. Lope de Vega, Calderon, Salazar and others, exercised their talents in this line.

There is a sort of representation very common in Spain, consisting of certain short and burlesque farces, called *Saynetes* and *Entremeses*, in which the characters are people in a low and mean station. These productions, wherein the national manners are painted to the life, generally contain a considerable portion of wit, vivacity and humour. Don Ramon de la Cruz has composed several very excellent *Saynetes*.\*

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\* Saynete is the term for a delicate and palatable morsel. The Saynete entitled *El Manolo*, wherein va-



I have now traced an historical summary of the progress made by the dramatic art in Spain. No one is prepared to deny to the major part of those writers who have cultivated it, fertility of imagination, amenity of genius, and other qualifications scarcely less important; but there are at the same time attributed to them so many defects, that their merit is considerably lessened. Without entering into a long discussion for the purpose of examining which of the charges that are usually brought forward against the Spanish dramatists are well founded, arising from their having neglected to follow the precepts dictated by reason and good sense, or which are merely occasioned by their having spurned certain arbitrary and merely conventional rules, I will conclude this sketch of the Spanish drama with a few consequent reflections.

Several writers of celebrity, as Castelvetro, Corneille, Molière, have agreed, that the sole or chief object of the dramatic art is to please the auditors. The last-mentioned writer, in

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gabonds and market-women apply to low and trivial subjects language suitable to tragedy, has been much relished by the nation.



the critique on his *Ecole des Femmes*, compares the critic who searches for other rules, to a man who, after having tasted an excellent sauce, is anxious to ascertain whether it be conformable to the precepts of French cookery. One of the chief faults of the ancient dramas is, that they are so complicated as to furnish each of them materials for two or three; but the defect in many modern comedies is a want of interest, since there are several which form only a connected chain of dialogues. The imagination is a pure and subtile flame; to turn it aside from its natural direction, is to deprive it by degrees of its power, until it becomes almost wholly extinguished. I will add, in defence of the Spanish Theatre, Lord Holland's very just and judicious observations: "Many of the sayings and maxims conveyed in quaint language, which are so common in the plays on early Spanish history, and which are hastily condemned by foreigners as instances of bad taste, form part of the tradition on which the stories are founded, and the omission of them would destroy that air of truth and originality, from which they derive much of their merit in the eyes of a Spanish audience. Shakespeare has preserved some colloquial phrases of Henry the Eighth, and



Richard the Third, which had been handed down to him by traditional report; and, I believe, most English critics will acknowledge that they would be grotesque were they of his invention; yet, as historical traits, they give an appearance of reality to the speeches which enhances the interest of the representation."

The chief part of the foregoing remarks upon the Spanish Drama have been already published in the original Spanish, in No. I. of *El Teatro Español*, as an introduction to some of the first plays in that collection, edited by the Author of this Essay.



## APPENDIX.

### ON THE METRES AND FORMS OF VERSE USED BY THE SPANIARDS.

**T**HE Spaniards, as has been already observed, possess several species of verse and metrical compositions which are peculiar to that people; of these I will subjoin a brief explanation, which will, I think, be interesting and useful to those who are applying themselves to the acquirement of the Spanish language, and to the perusal of the lyric and dramatic poets; it will also serve to illustrate the specimens that follow.\*

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\* I annex a few instructions on the mode of scanning Spanish verses. Each syllable counts for a foot. Example:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Como se van las horas.

When two vowels are found together, if the first has no accent, both form only one foot. Example:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Quando el alba en oriente.

In *versos agudos*, that is, in verses wherein the concluding word has an accent on the last syllable, as *amór*, *dió*, *caridad*, &c. this final syllable counts for two feet. Example:

1 2 3 4 5

Mi dulce amór.

In verses called *esdruxulos*, which conclude with a word



The Spanish verses are of two sorts, viz. *De Arte Mayor*, and *De Arte Menor*. The verses *De Arte Menor* are divided into *Redondillas Mayores*, and *Redondillas Menores*. The *Redondillas Mayores* contain eight syllables. The following are examples of this kind of verse:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Sale la Estrella de Oriente.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Es Dios un ser sin mudanza.

The *Redondillas Menores* are composed of six syllables. Examples:

1 2 3 4 5 6

Ví mi pensamiento

1 2 3 4 5 6

Lleno de amargura.

Por tí Señor tuve

Dolor algun dia.

The verses of *Arte Mayor* contain twelve feet, or syllables, being composed of two *Redondillas Menores*:

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accented on the antepenultimate syllable, as *pérfido*, *prólogo* &c. the two last syllables only count for one foot. Example:

1 2 3 4 5

Amante pérfido.

The other species of verses styled *llanos*, terminate in a word accented on the penultimate syllable, as *tranquilo*, *buéno*, &c. Agreeably to the general rule, each syllable is considered as a foot.



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Temí la tormenta del mar alterado,

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Que traga en un punto riquezas y vida.

To these two species of verses may be added, that which is composed of seven and nine feet. Example of those of seven feet:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

O dulce Tortolilla,

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

No mas la selva muda

Con tus dolientes ayes

Molestes importuna.

*Melendez.*

The Spaniards call *Quebrado* those shorter verses which, in certain compositions, are to be found intermingled with *Redondillas Mayores*. Example:

Recuerde el alma dormida,

Avise el seso y despierte

Contemplando

Como se pasa la vida,

Como se viene la muerte

Tan callando.

*D. Jorge Manrique.*

¿ Quien hace al tuerto galan

Y prudente al sin consejo?

¿ Quien al avariento viejo

Le sirve de rio Jordan?

¿ Quien hace de piedras pan

Sin ser el Dios verdadero?

El dinero.

*Quevedo.*

They also make use of a rhyme termed *Asonante*, which is peculiar to them. This



rhyme consists in the uniformity of the two last vowels, counting from the accent. Example:

Tras una mariposa  
 Qual zagalejo símples—i. e.  
 Corriendo por el valle  
 La senda á perder vine.—i. e.  
 Recosteme cansado,  
 Y un sueño tan felice—i. e.  
 Gozé que aun hoy gustoso,  
 Mi labio lo repite—i. e.

In acute words, that is, in words that have the accent upon the final vowel, as *llevó*, *amór*, the uniformity of this vowel is sufficient. Example:

En la pena aguda  
 Que me hace sufrir—í.  
 El niño vendado,  
 Desde que te ví—í.  
 Mil veces zagala  
 Te voy á pedir—í.  
 Remedio . . . . .

*Melendez.*

In words which have a diphthong in the ultimate or penultimate syllable, the uniformity of two vowels, one of which should be the predominating vowel of the diphthong, is sufficient to form the *Rima Asonante*.\* So *aciago*

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\* The *Rima Asonante* conveys an agreeable sensation to the ears of those who are accustomed to the sound of it, whilst it does not fatigue them with the monotony that results from the repetition of the other rhymes, which the Spaniards term *Consonantes*.



rhymes with *agrio* and *incauto*, on account of the vowels *a*, *o*.

Solo el Oro es quien priva,  
Su lindeza es la sola :  
Pues, ah ! muera el primero  
Que apuró sus escorias.

*Villegas.*

Segura navegabas :  
Que por la tierra propia  
Nunca el peligro es mucho  
Adonde el agua es poca.

With the above verses are formed many couplets and metrical compositions, such as *Pareados*, *Tercetos*, *Quartetos*, *Quintillas*, *Coplas Reales*, and *Decimas*, *Villancicos*, *Romances*, *Endechas*, *Seguidillas*.

### *Pareados.*

- 1o. Las lágrimas de Muger  
Por mil cosas pueden ser ;
- 2o. Mas lágrimas de Varon  
O son zelos ó aficion.

These couplets are styled *Pareados de Rondilla Mayor*, on account of the verses that compose them.

### *Tercetos.*

La muerte con pies iguales—*A*.  
Mide la casa pagiza—*B*.  
Y los Palacios Reales—*A*.

El contento y el pesar—*A*.  
Como á un punto han de acabar—*A*.  
Todos se miden á un punto—*B*.



*Quartillas, or Quartetas, couplets of four verses.*

¡ A que violentos excesos,—A.  
 Una pasión irritada—B.  
 Lleva, si no es atajada—B.  
 Con razón en sus progresos!—A.  
 Llama con pábulo es,—C.  
 Que quanto encuentra destruye,—D.  
 Y el que al principio no huye,—D.  
 No halla camino despues.—C.

*Lope de Vega, en Sancho Ortiz.*

The Spaniards also compose pieces of six, seven, eight and nine verses, examples of which may be seen in *El Teatro de los Dioses*, and other productions.

*Coplas Reales.*

The *Coplas Reales* are composed of two couplets of five verses each. Example:

¡ Quien se atreve á navegar  
 En tan peligroso mar,  
 Donde el Piloto es incierto  
 Y hay peligros en el puerto  
 No menos que en alta mar?

Donde navegas de suerte  
 Que te ves cada momento  
 Entre las ondas y el viento,  
 Tragando la dura muerte  
 O viviendo con tormento.

The *Quartetos* and the *Coplas Reales* are used by the dramatic poets.



*Decima.*

The *Decima* is another species of couplet of ten verses *de Redondilla Mayor*, much used by the Spaniards, on account of its elegance; it ordinarily serves to express a striking and brilliant thought, the force of which is generally thrown into the concluding verses. The following are examples:

*Sepulchral Inscription on a Wild Boar, killed by a Queen  
in the Chase.\**

Aquí yace un Javalí  
A manos de una Deidad,  
Muriera de vanidad.  
Si otra vez volviera en sí,  
Cazador que por aquí  
En busca de fieras vas,  
Vuelve los pasos atras :  
Ninguna hallaras con vida ;  
Que esta murió de la herida  
Y de envidia las demas.

*To Prince Don Fernando, Son of Philip the Fifth, who  
saved the Life of his Princess, by killing a Wild Bull,  
which had attacked her.*

¿ Bizarria tan fogosa  
Señor quando solo estaba  
Media alma en tí, pues quedaba  
La otra mitad en tu Esposa ?  
Si tu diestra valerosa  
Aun así triunfa guerrera

---

\* This and the following *Decima* are quoted by Masdeu, in the first volume of his *Historia Critica*, p. 234.



Del ímpetu de una fiera,  
 ¿ Que será si logra España  
 Verte armado en la campaña  
 Con el alma toda entera?

### *Villancicos.*

*Villancicos* are divided into two parts, called *Cabeza*, (head) and *Pié* (foot); the *Cabeza* may be composed of two, three, or four verses, one or two of which may be *Quebrados*. The *Pié* is composed of six verses, the four first of which are called *Mudanzas*, (changes,) because the rhymes are different from those of the *Cabeza*, and the two others are called *Vuelta*, (turn,) because the rhymes of the *Cabeza* are therein repeated. It is customary to repeat, after these six verses of the *Pié*, the last, or two last verses of the *Cabeza*. *Villancicos* are sung and are oftenest consecrated to religious subjects, as the birth of Jesus Christ, &c. Example:

#### *Cabeza.*

Llega mudo, manco y ciego  
 Tocale con solo el labio,  
 No te pegues, si eres sabio  
 Como mariposa al fuego.

#### *Pies.*

##### *Mudanza 1a.*

La razon con razon loca  
 Como ve á Dios con antojos,



*Mudanza 2a.*

Saca fuego de sus ojos  
Y al punto prende en la boca :

*Vuelta.*

Pero tu escarmienta luego  
Y pues tocas con el labio,

*Repeticion.*

No te pegues si eres sabio  
Como mariposa al fuego.

*Villancico con Quebrados.**Cabeza.*

Quando el corazon se abrasa  
Echa luego,  
Por las ventanas de casa  
Vivo fuego.

*Pies.*

No se puede reprimir  
El amor,  
Aunque mas quiera encubrir  
Su fervor,  
Que como es niño y ciego  
Da sin tasa  
Por las ventanas de casa  
Vivo fuego.

The Spaniards also compose *Villancicos de Redondilla Menor*. There are likewise some *Villancicos* written in *versos asonantes*, and others in which verses of nine or ten syllables are blended together.



*Romances.*

*Romances* are composed of *versos disonantes* or *versos sueltos*, (blank verse,) and *versos asonantes*. All the equal verses of these compositions are *asonantes*; the unequal are *disonantes*. *Romances* are of two sorts, viz. *de Redondilla mayor* and *de Redondilla menor*. The first which are the most common enter into the composition of dramatic pieces, and other poems of great length. There are some *Romances* which are sung; these are called *Jacaras*.

*Al Tiempo.*

Tiempo que todo lo mudas,  
 Tú que con las horas breves  
 Lo que nos diste nos quitas,  
 Lo que llevastes nos vuelves;  
 Tú que de vengar agravios  
 Te precias como valiente,  
 Pues castigas hermosuras  
 Por satisfacer desdenes.  
 Tú que con pies desiguales  
 Pisas del mundo las leyes,  
 Cuya sed beve los rios  
 Y su arena no los siente.  
 Tú que de Monarcas grandes  
 Llevas en los pies las frentes;  
 Tú que das muerte y das vida  
 A la Vida y á la Muerte.



Si quieres que yo idolatre  
 En tu guadaña insolente,  
 En tus dolorosas canas,  
 En tus alas y en tu sierpe, &c. &c.

Quevedo.

Besides these species of *Romances*, there are some of four, five, and even of nine and eleven syllables: those of eleven syllables are styled *Romances heroicos*.

### *Endechas.*

The Spaniards call by this name pieces composed of four and seven syllables, *asonantes* and *disonantes* distributed, as in the *Romances*. *Endechas* are generally used to express lamentations.

### *A una Ausencia.*

Montes de Africa adustos  
 Cuyas cumbres soberbias  
 O escalan ó sostienen  
 Las celestes esferas:  
     Sierras de Mauritania  
 Cuya inculta aspereza  
 Sus fieras y sus hombres  
 De horror y susto pueblan:  
     Desechos edificios  
 Mal conservadas huellas,  
 Que de la rica Velez  
 Sois ruinas apenas.



Si bien justo retrato  
 En que se representan  
 Mis dichas arruinadas  
 A golpes de la fuerza :  
 Ignominioso escollo  
 Cuya esteril dureza  
 El llanto de infelices  
 Inutilmente riega, &c. &c.

There are some *Endechas* termed *Reales*, in which the fourth verse of each couplet is a verse of eleven syllables. Example :

Testigo son bien mio  
 Las lagrimas que vierto—e. o.  
 Del dolor riguroso  
 Que las abre camino desde el pecho.—e. o.  
 Mis ardientes suspiros.  
 Esparcen por el viento—e. o.  
 Las nuevas infelices  
 De que está el triste corazon enfermo, &c.—e. o.

### *Seguidillas.*

Seguidillas are short pieces in verse which are sung, and are generally used to express amorous sentiments, and sometimes moral reflections.

En una alforja al hombro  
 Llevo los vicios,  
 Delante los agenos,  
 Detras los mios :



Eso hacen todos,  
 Asi ven los agenos,  
 Mas no los propios.

To the compositions in verse which I have just defined may be added *Liras*, the invention of which is attributed to Garcilaso de la Vega. This elegant form of versification, used also by the Italian poets, is equally suited to the celebration of the sublime truths of religion, the precepts of morality, and the doctrines of philosophy. It is composed of Hendecasyllable verses *Enteros* and *Quebrados*. The following example is extracted from Garcilaso :

Si de mi baxa Lira  
 Tanto pudiere el son que en un momento  
 Aplacase la ira  
 Del animoso viento,  
 Y la furia del mar y el movimiento :  
 Y en ásperas montañas  
 Con el suave canto enterneciese  
 Las fieras alimañas,  
 Los árboles moviese  
 Y al son confusamente los truxese, &c.

The Spanish poets in addition to the forms of verse peculiar to themselves, not only employ the *Sonnets*, *Canciones* and almost all the other compositions of the Italians, but also the *Sapphics* and other metres used by the Latin poets.



I will terminate this brief account of Spanish versification with the following lines extracted from the *Arte Nuevo* of Lope de Vega, wherein that author describes the use of a few of the measures that are introduced into comedies.

*Las Decimas* son buenas para queixas ;

*El Soneto* está bien en los que aguardan :

*Las relaciones* piden los *Romances*

Aunque en *Octavas* lucen por extremo :

Son los *Tercetos* para cosas graves,

Y para las de amor las *Redondillas*.

*Decimas* are adapted for lamentations; the *Sonnet* is well suited to express hope; relations require *Romances*, although they are very effective in *Octavas*; *Tercetos* are proper for grave subjects, and *Redondillas* for those of love.



SPECIMENS  
OF  
LANGUAGE AND STYLE,  
IN  
PROSE AND VERSE,

TAKEN FROM  
VARIOUS CASTILIAN AUTHORS,

AND

*Disposed according to the order of Centuries from the  
Twelfth to the present.*



**MUESTRAS**  
**DE**  
**LENGUAGE Y ESTILO,**  
**EN**  
**PROSA Y VERSO,**  
**SACADAS DE**  
**VARIOS AUTORES CASTELLANOS,**  
**Y**

*Dispuestas por orden de Siglos desde el XII. hasta el  
presente.*



## ADVERTENCIA.

**EL** principal motivo de añadirse estas muestras al Ensayo que precede ha sido, para que cotejando el estilo de los mas antiguos escritores con el de algunos de los que escribieron en el buen siglo y con el de los autores modernos, se vean los progresos que ha hecho el Romance Castellano desde su formacion y las mudanzas que ha experimentado. Pero como no se hayan tenido á mano todas las obras que eran necesarias, no se han podido incluir otros pasages que tal vez interesarian mas á los lectores.



## MUESTRAS DEL SIGLO XII.

VERSO.*POEMA DEL CID.*

**E**L mas antiguo monumento de la Literatura Española que se ha conservado hasta nuestros dias es el *Poema del Cid*, cuyo autor se ignora así como el tiempo en que se escribió, aunque Don Thomas Sanchez supone con fundadas razones que fué á fines del siglo XII. Pónense aquí dos muestras de esta obra. En la primera se cuenta la despedida que hizo el *Cid* Ruiz Diaz de su muger Doña Ximena quando salió desterrado por orden del rey ; y en la segunda se describe el combate entre los campeones nombrados por el *Cid* y los Infantes de Carrion, los quales habiéndose casado solo por interes con las hijas de este héroe las maltrataron despues en Robledo hasta dexarlas por muertas.



*Oracion de Doña Ximena y despedida del Cid Campeador.*

Tu eres rey de los reyes é de todo el mundo padre :  
 A ti adoro é creo de toda voluntad  
 E ruego á San Peydro que me ayude á rogar  
 Por mi Cid el Campeador que Dios le curie de mal  
 Quando hoy nos partimos, en vida nos faz yuntar.  
 La oracion fecha la Misa acabada la han :  
 Salieron de la Eglesia ya quieren cavalgar.  
 El Cid á Doña Ximena ibala abrazar  
 Doña Ximena al Cid la manol' va á besar,  
 Lorando de los ojos que non sabe que se far.  
 E el á las niñas tornólas á catar \*  
 A Dios vos acomiendo fijas  
 E á la mugier al padre spiritual.  
 Agora nos partimos, Dios sabe el ayuntar :  
 Lorando de los oios que non viestes á tal,  
 Asis parten unos d'otros como la uña de la carne. †  
 Mio Cid con los sus vasallos penso de cavalgar,  
 A todos esperando la cabeza tornando va.

*Descripcion del Combate entre los Campeones del Cid y los Infantes de Carrion.*

Desi vinien los de mio Cid á los Infantes de Carrion,  
 E los Infantes de Carrion á los del Campeador.  
 Cada uno de ellos mientes tiene al so. ‡

---

\* Mirar.

† Expresa este verso de un modo muy vivo el dolor de la despedida de los dos esposos.

‡ So pron. poses. suyo.



Abrazan los escudos delant' los corazones :

Abaxan las lanzas abueltas con los péndones :

Enclinaban las caras sobre los arzones :

Batien los caballos con los espolones :

Tembrar querie la tierra dond † eran movedores.

Cada uno dellos mientes tiene al so.

Todos tres por tres ya juntados son.

Cuédanse que esora cádran muertos los que están aderredor.

Pero Bermudez el que antes rebtó ‡

Con Ferran Gonzalez de cara se juntó :

Ferianse en los escudos sin todo pavor :

Ferran Gonzalez a Pero Bermudez el escudo<sup>l</sup> pasó :

Prisol' en vacío, en carne nol' tomó :

Bien en dos logares el astil § le quebró :

Firme estido Pero Bermudez, por eso nos' encamó :

Un golpe recibiera mas otro firió :

Quebrantó la boca del escudo, apart gela || echó :

Pasagelo todo que nada nol' valió

Metió la lanza por los pechos que nada nol' valió :

Tres dobles de loriga tenie Fernando, aquestol' prestó : ¶

Las dos le desmanchan e la tercera fincó

El belmez con la camisa e con la guarnizon

De dentro en la carne una mano gela metió

Por la boca afuera la sangrel' salió,

Quebraronle las cinchas, ninguna nol' ovo pró : \*\*

Por la copla del caballo en tierra lo echó,

Así lo tenien las yentes que mal ferido es de muert.

† *Dond* de donde (Ital. donde).

‡ *Retar* que es como hoy se dice significa acusar de alevoso un noble á otro delante del rey y tambien desafiar.

§ *Astil* mango de la lanza.

|| *Gela, gelo* equivalen á *sela, selo*.

¶ Esto le sirvió, le ayudó.

\*\* *Ovo* preterito de haber : *pró*, provecho.



## SIGLO XIII.

## PROSA.

*Las Leyes de las siete Partidas.*

EL rey Don Alonso X. justamente appellidado el Sabio, subió al trono por los años de 1252. Con el esmero y conatos de este rey en mejorar la lengua y con el impulso que dió á las letras, caminaron estas rapidamente ácia su perfeccion.\* El monumento mas precioso que ha quedado del reynado de este monarca es el código llamado *de las siete Partidas* á causa de su division, en el qual se ven hermanadas las reglas de la equidad y prudencia con las profundas meditaciones de la filosofia. Solo le falta á esta obra ser mas conocida para ser generalmente estimada de los extrangeros.

Trasladaré aqui el contenido de una de las leyes de la quarta Partida, en la qual se describen algunas de las ventajas que consigo trae la amistad.

---

\* Véase la pag. 10 del Ensayo.



“ Prouecho grande e bien, viene a los omes de la amistad; de guisa que segund dixo Aristoteles: ningun ome que aya bondad en si, non quiere benir en este mundo sin amigos: maguer \* fuesse abondado de todos los bienes que en el son. E quanto los omes son mas honrrados, e mas poderosos, e mas ricos, tanto han menester mas los amigos. E este por dos razones. La primera porque ellos non podrian auer prouecho de las riquezas, si non vsassen de ellas, e tal vso deue ser en fazer bien, e el bien fecho deue ser dado a los amigos, e por ende † los que amigos non han, non pueden vsar bien de las riquezas que ouieren, maguer sean abondados dellas. La segunda razon es, porque por los amigos se guardan, e se acrescientan las riquezas e las honrras que los omes han, ca ‡ de otra guisa sin amigos non podrian durar, porque quanto mas honrrado, e mas poderoso es el ome, peor golpe rescibe, si fallestes ayuda de los amigos. E aun dixo el mismo, que aun los otros omes que non son ricos, nin poderosos, han menester en todas guisas, ayuda de amigos que los acorran en su pobreza e los fuercen en los peligros que les acaescieren.

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\* *Maguer*, aunque.

† *Por ende* por lo qual.

‡ *Ca*, pues. (Frances, *car.*)



E sobre todo dixo, que en qualquier edad que sea el ome ha menester ayuda, ca si fuer niño, ha menester amigos, que lo crien, e lo guarden, que non faga nin aprenda cosa que le este mal, e si fuer mancebo mejor entendera e fara todas las cosas que ouiere de fazer, con ayuda de sus amigos que solo, e si fuere viejo ayudar se a de sus amigos, en las cosas de que fuere menguado,\* o que non puede fazer por si, por los embargos que vienen a la vejez."

VERSO.

Hállase este pasage en un poema de *Juan Lorenzo* escritor del reynado de Don Fernando, padre de Don Alonso el Sabio. Describe el poeta los engaños de la vida humana con figuras y expresiones muy enérgicas y naturales.

Nunca en este siglo debe home á fiar  
Que sabe á tus cosas tan mala zaga dar;  
A baxos é á altos non sabe perdonar  
Por este sieglo non debemos el otro olvidar.

Anda cuemo † rueda que non quier aturar, ‡  
El home malastrugo § non se sabe guardar:

---

\* *Fuere menguado*, careciere ó tuviere falta.

† *Cuemo*, como.

‡ *Aturar*, parar. Usase esta voz en Cataluña.

§ *Malastrugo*, desventurado.



Sabe traer falagos, sabenos engannar,  
Non puede en un estado nunca quedo estar.

Quando el home ha puesto en algun bon lugar  
Diz: cede maiori, pensalo despennar,  
Fazlo tal qual nació á la tierra tornar:  
Va buscar otros que pueda engannar.

Quando ha el home deste sieglo á pasar  
Valia dun dinero non le dexa levar:  
Quanto gana el home todo lo ha de dexar,  
Hanlo sus enemigos mortales á lograr.

Tuelle \* con sus falagos á home el sentido:  
Lo quel debia membrar échalo en olvido.  
Es la carne sennora e el espiritu vencido:  
Faz barrer la casa la muger al marido.

Encarna el pecado enno home mesquino,  
Vuelvelo en cobdicia, sacalo de camino.  
Fazle olvidar la materia onde vino:  
El sieglo por escarnio fazle el bocino.

Quien mas puede mas face, non de bien mas de mal:  
Quien mas ha haver, mas quier é morre por ganal:  
Non veeria de su grado nenguno so igual:  
Mal pecado, nenguno no es á Dios leal.

Las aves e las bestias, los homes, los pescados  
Todos son entre sí á bandos derramados.  
De vicio é de soberbia son todos entregados:  
Los flacos de los fuertes andan desafiados.

---

\* *Tuelle*, quita: viene del infinit. *toller*, (Lat. *tollere*: Ital. *togliere*).



## SIGLO XIV.

## PROSA.

*Don Pedro Lopez de Ayala.*

DON PEDRO LOPEZ DE AYALA fué hombre tan distinguido por su saber como por su nacimiento. Vivió en tiempo de los reyes Don Pedro, Don Henrique II. Don Juan I. y D. Henrique III. cuyas crónicas escribió, así como la del Conde Don Pero Nuño. De esta última se ha sacado la muestra siguiente, en la qual, despues de dar cuenta de la primitiva forma de gobierno que tuvieron los hombres, se definen las quatro virtudes cardinales:

“Entonce aún no avian las gentes reyes; mas avia patriarcas: tomaban aquel que era mayor, é mas antiguo, é mas sesudo en el linage, é por aquel se guiaban, é le acataban \* por señor. E con el estudio de la razon que Dios dió al ome sobre las otras criaturas para dis-

---

\* *Acatar*, venerar, respetar.



cerner entre el bien é el mal, vinieron aquellos en conocimiento de las quatro virtudes cardinales, que son estas, prudencia, é justicia, é temperanza, é fortaleza; é son dichas cardinales á *cardine*, que es el quicio de la puerta; que bien asi como la puerta es traída al derredor, é el quicio siempre es en un lugar, bien asi la nuestra vida humana debe ser regída por estas quatro virtudes cardinales.

“ ¿Cómo se definen estas quatro virtudes? Justicia es hábito de la mente, proveimiento de razon, dar á cada uno lo que suyo es. Iten justicia es dar á cada uno su dignidad é honra segund que le es debida, é señorío al que es debido señorío, é tributo al que es debido tributo. Iten justicia es ayuntamiento de humanal compañía: non cobdiciar de empecer\* á ninguno, mas de aprovecharle: non tirar á ninguno lo suyo, mas restituirle la deuda: é amar á Dios sobre todas las cosas. Prudencia es discrecion de bien é de mal, desechando el mal é usando del bien; porque el ome debe discernir entre el bien é el mal, teniendo el bien, é fuyendo el mal. Prudencia es discrecion del bien é del mal, con escogimiento del uno, é desechamiento del otro.

---

\* *Empecer*, dañar, causar perjuicio.



Fortitudo es que se ponga el ome á las cosas arduas como á las muelles, porque non sea apremiado en las adversidades, nin se ensobervezca en las prosperidades. Iten fortitudo es en las prosperidades é en las adversidades homildad sin sobervia é sin desesperacion. Temperanza es firmeza contra los desconvinientes movimientos. En la prudencia fallaron los comienzos de las cosas, é qué fin avian, ó á qué deben venir, é fallaron la circuicion \* de las siete artes liberales que son muy necesarias á la vivienda de los omes en este mundo. Llamaronlas liberales, porque en aquel tiempo non las enseñaban si non á los fijos libres; non las mostraban á los fijos bastardos, nin á los siervos. Por otra manera las dixerón liberales, porque delibran á los omes en las cosas que les son necesarias, é los guardan de las empecibles. E en la justicia, que es dar á cada uno lo que suyo es, fallaron la misericordia é la piedad, porque de justicia non pasáse en crueldad: é que non ficiese uno á otro lo que non querria que ficiesen á él. En la temperanza fallaron la continencia, é la advertencia, que es abstenerse ome de las cosas que demanda su voluntad, discernierlas en el seso, ponerlas en las valanzas de la . . . . ., é la que mucho

---

\* *Circuicion*, circulacion ó curso.



alzáre cargarla mas, é la que mucho abaxáre aliviarla, fasta que venga en la igualanza que cumple: é tomar tanto de las cosas lo que non puede escusar é le es necesario, é dexar las que le traen daño; porque la voluntad ama, é la necesidad obliga. La fortaleza les mostro ser fuertes é constantes en el propósito comenzado, en comenzar á acometer los grandes fechos, estár firmes en ellos fasta traerles alfin que ellos esperan: é á fablar verdad, é facerla é tenerla, é non ser resvalados nin movibles en sus fechos."

VERSO.

*El Archipreste de Hita.*

Los dos pasages siguientes se han sacado de un poema de Juan Ruiz, Archipreste de Hita, quien, segun Don Manuel Quintana, "Vencia á todos los (poetas) anteriores, y pocos le aventajaron despues en facultad de inventar, en vivacidad de fantasia y de ingenio, en abundancia de chistes y de sales."\* El primer pasage contiene una súplica del poeta á Venus para que le asista en sus amorosas cuitas, y el segundo la respuesta y consejos que le da esta Diosa.

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\* Quintana, *Coleccion de Poesias*, Tomo I. Véase tambien el Ensayo, pag. 12.



*Suplica á Venus.*

De talle muy apuesta, de gestos amorosa  
 Donegil, muy lozana, plasentera et fermosa,  
 Cortes et mesurada, falaguera \* donosa,  
 Graciosa e risueña, amor de toda cosa .....

Señora Doña Venus, muger de Don Amor,  
 Noble dueña, omillome yo veustro servidor,  
 De todas cosas sodes vos el amor Señor,  
 Todos vos obedescen como a su facedor.

Reyes, Duques, et Condes é toda criatura  
 Vos temen é vos sirven como á veustra féchura,  
 Complid los mios deseos, et dadme dicha é ventura,  
 Non me seades escasa, nin esquivá nin dura .....

So ferido é llagado, de un dardo so perdido  
 En el corazon lo trayo encerrado et ascondido;  
 Non oso mostrar la laga, matarme á si la olvido,  
 E aun desir non oso el nombre de quien me ha ferido.

El color he perdido, mis sesos desfallecen,  
 La fuerza non la tengo, mis ojos non parescen,  
 Si vos non me valedes mis miembros desfallecen.

*Respuesta de la Diosa Venus.*

Toda muger que mucho otea, ó es risueña,  
 Dil' sin miedo tus coitas,† non te embargue vergueña,‡  
 Apenas de mil una te desprecie.

Si la primera onda de la mar ayrada  
 Espantase al marinero quando viene turbada,

\* Halagüeña.

† Coitas, cuitas, ansias, deseos vehementes.

‡ Vergüenza.



Nunca en la mar entrarie con su nave ferrada:  
Non te espante la dueña la primera vegada.\*

Con arte se quebrantan los corazones duros,  
Tomanse las ciudades, derribanse los muros,  
Caen las torres altas, alzanse peses duros,  
Por arte juran muchos, por arte son perjuros,  
Por arte los pescados se toman so † las ondas.

## SIGLO XV.

### PROSA.

*Fernando del Pulgar.*

FUE este escritor Secretario y Coronista de los reyes Don Fernando y Doña Isabel. Compuso varias obras las quales por su elegancia y demas prendas de estilo son tenidas en mucha estimacion entre las de este siglo.‡ Pónese por muestra una carta en que el autor contradiciendo á Ciceron pinta los males y sinsabores que acompañan la vejez.

“Loa tambien (Tulio) la vejez, porque está llena de autoridad é de consejo; é por cierto

---

\* *Vegada*, vez. Usase esta voz en Cataluña.

† *So*: debaxo; úsase esta voz con algunos nombres; así se dice *so color*, *so pena*.

‡ Véase el Ensayo, pag. 15, nota segunda.



dice verdad; como quiera que yo he visto muchos viejos llenos de dias é vacios de seso, á los quales ni los años dieron autoridad, ni la esperiencia pudo dar doctrina . . . . . Lo a tambien la vejez porque está cerca de ir á visitar los buenos en la otra vida: é desta visitacion veo yo que todos huímos, é huyera asimismo Tulio si no le tomáran á manos, é le enviaran su camino á facer esta visitacion, que mucho loó é poco deseó. Porque hablando en su reverencia, uno de los mayores males que padece el viejo es el pensamiento de tener cercana la muerte, el qual le face no gozar de todos los otros bienes de la vida; porque todos naturalmente querriamos conservar este sér, y esto acá no puede ser; porque quanto mas esta vida crece, tanto mas decrece; é quanto mas anda, tanto mas vá a no andar. Y lo mas grave que yo veo es, que si el viejo quiere usar como viejo, huyen dél; como mozo, burlan dél. No es para servir, porque no puede; no para ser servido, porque riñe: no para compañía de mozos, porque el tiempo les apartó la conversacion: menos le pueden convenir los viejos, porque la vejez desacuerda sus propositos. Comen con pena . . . . ., enojosos á los que los menean: aborrecibles á los propinquos si son pobres, porque tardan en morir: aborrecibles si son ricos é viven mucho, porque tarda su herencia."



VERSO.

*Letrilla del Marques de Santillana, uno de los  
mas famosos poetas que ilustraron el reynado  
de Don Juan II.*

Moza tan formosa  
Non vi en la frontera  
Como una vaquera,  
De la Finojosa.

Faciendo la via  
De Calateveño  
A Santa Maria,  
Vencido del Sueño  
Por tierra fragosa  
Perdí la carrera,  
Do ví la vaquera  
De la Finojosa.

En un verde prado  
De rosas é flores  
Guardando ganado  
Con otros pastores  
La vi tan fermosa  
Que apenas creyera  
Que fuese vaquera,  
De la Finojosa.

Non creo las rosas  
De la Primavera,  
Sean tan fermosas  
Nin de tal manera.  
Fablando sin glosa,  
Si antes supiera,



Daquella vaquera

De la Finojosa,

Non tanto mirára

Su mucha beldad,

Porque me dexára

En mi libertad :

Mas dixe, donosa,

Por saber quién era

Aquella vaquera

De la Finojosa.

## SIGLO XVI.

ESTE siglo se llamó de oro á causa del grande número de escritores que florecieron en él, los quales enriquecieron los diferentes ramos de nuestra literatura con excelentes obras. Alcanzó la lengua en este siglo y durante parte del siguiente su mayor perfeccion, pues las mudanzas que experimentó despues de esta época contribuyeron mas bien á su detrimento y menoscabo que á su mejora.\* Las tres muestras siguientes se han sacado de tres escritores, cuyas obras, á pesar de su mérito, son menos conocidas de los extrangeros que las que escribieron otros autores. La primera

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\* Véase el Ensayo, pag. 16, y la quarta Epoca.



es del maestro Fernan Pérez de Oliva, la segunda se halla en el relox de Príncipes de Don Fray Antonio de Guevara, y la tercera en un sermon del P. Luis de Granada, uno de los mas eloqüentes escritores ascéticos de este siglo.\*

*Utilidad de la Labranza, y Ventajas de la Vida del Labrador.*

“ Los que labran la tierra no son esclavos de los que moramos en las ciudades, sino nuestros padres, pues que nos mantienen; y no solamente á nosotros, sino tambien á las bestias que nos sirven, y á las plantas que nos dan fruto. Grande parte del mundo tiene vida por los labradores, y gran galardón es de su trabajo el fruto que dél sacan. Y no pienses que son tales sus afanes quales te parecen, pues con sus exercicios no sienten el frío, y del calor se recrean en las sombras de los bosques, do tienen por cama los prados floridos, y por cortinas los ramos de los árboles. Desde allí oien los ruiseñores y las otras aves, y tañen las flautas ó dicen sus cantares, sueltos de cuidados y de ganas de valer, mas atormentadores de la vida humana que frío ni calor.

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\* Véase el Ensayo titulo Eloqüencia sagrada.



Allí comen su pan que con sus manos sembraron, y otra qualquier vianda de las que sin trabaxo se pueden hallar ; dichosos con su estado, pues no hay pobreza ni mala fortuna para el que se contenta. Asi viven en sus soledades sin hacer ofensa á nadie y sin recibirla: donde alcanzan no mas entendimiento de las cosas que es menester para gozarlas.”

*Del M. Fernan Perez de Oliva, en el Diálogo de la Dignidad del Hombre.*

*Inconstancia de los Hombres.*

“Desde que los árboles fueron criados, siempre hasta hoy, conforme á su primera naturaleza, llevan la hoja y fruta : lo qual parece claro es en que la palma lleva dátiles, la higuera higos, y la encina bellota. Finalmente digo que todas las cosas han conservado su naturaleza, sino es el pecador del hombre, que ha declinado á malicia. Los planetas, las estrellas, los cielos, las aguas, la tierra, el ayre, el fuego, los animales, las plantas y los peces todos estan en lo que fueron criados, sin se quejar ni tener envidia unos de otros: solo el hombre nunca se acaba de hartar, y siempre desea su estado mudar. Entre los mortales, bien dice Plinio, que no hay cosa mas comun y con esto mas peligrosa que dar lugar al pensamiento á que piense que el estado de los unos es muy mejor



que el estado de los otros: y de aqui viene que la malicia humana asi ciega á los hombres, que quieren mas alcanzar lo ageno con trabaxo que no gozar de lo suyo proprio con reposo."

*D. Fr. Antonio de Guevara.*

*De la Humildad.*

"No sé por cierto, hermanos míos, porqué nos han de agradar mas los caminos ásperos de los vicios que los llanos de las virtudes. En la humildad se halla el descanso, la tranquilidad y paz. Porque como ella sea de su natural pacífica y llana; aunque se levanten contra ella los vientos y tempestades del mundo, no hallan adonde quebrar las fuerzas de sus ímpetus furiosos. Blandamente se allanan las grandes ondas de la mar en la arena, que con grande ruido suenan y baten en las altas peñas. Qualquiera encuentro que venga á dar sobre el humilde, como no le resiste, antes baxa la cabeza; despidele de sí, dandole lugar, y dexandole pasar. Toda la braveza de la mar es contra las altas rocas y peñascos; y pierde su furia en la blandura de las llanas y blandas arenas. En los altos montes andan recios los vientos, que no se sienten en los valles baxos y humildes.—Los caminos de los sobervios son quebrados, llenos de barrancos y peñascos;



porque donde está la soberbia está la indignacion, allí la ferocidad, allí la inquietud y desasosiego, porque aun acá padezca el soberbio esta justa condenacion, y acá comienze el malo su infierno; como el alma del bueno dende acá tiene ya principio de su gloria en la quietud de su conciencia.”

*Granada.*

VERSO.

*Garcilaso de la Vega.*

Arrebató la muerte á este dulcísimo Poeta en la mitad de su carrera, por cuyo motivo no ha dexado sino un corto numero de poesias, que sirvieron de modelo á los que despues de él han obtenido mas fama. Entre ellas han merecido grande aprobacion, ademas del Soneto que aqui se pone y la primera Egloga de la qual se ha hecho mencion en el Ensayo,\* los Sonetos que empiezan *O dulces prendas por mi mal halladas*, y *Como la tierna madre que el doliente*, y *La Cancion á la Flor de Gnido*.

SONETO.

Gracias al cielo doy que ya del cuello  
Del todo el grave yugo he sacudido,

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\* Véase el Ensayo en el titulo *Lyric Poetry* y Saavedra, en el pasage de la *Republica Literaria*, que se pondrá por muestra de la prosa del siglo XVII.



Y que del viento el mar embravecido  
Veré desde la tierra sin temello.

Veré colgada de un sutil cabello  
La vida del amante embebecido  
En su error, y en su engaño adormecido,  
Sordo á las voces que le avisan dello.

Alegraráme el mal de los mortales,  
Mas no es mi corazon tan inhumano  
En aqueste mi error, como parece ;

Porque yo huelgo, como huelga el sano,  
No de ver á los otros en los males,  
Sino de ver que dellos él carece.

FRAY LUIS DE LEON.

*Profecía del Tajo.*

El argumento de esta *Oda* sublime es la profecía del rio Tajo al Rey Rodrigo, cuyos amores con la Cava fueron causa de la venida de los Moros y perdida de España. La idea es tomada, como queda dicho,\* de la *Oda* de Horacio que empieza *Pastor quum traheret* en la qual Nereo anuncia á Paris los males que debia ocasionar el Rapto de Helena. Aprovecharonse de la misma idea Cervantes quien en la Tragedia de la Numancia introduce al rio Duero profetizando la destruccion de esta Ciudad, y Camoens el qual finge en la *Lusiada* que el Genio protector del cabo de las Tormentas sale de las aguas para oponerse al pasage de los Europeos.

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\* Véase el Ensayo, *Lyric Poetry*.



## ODA.

Folgaba el Rey Rodrigo  
 Con la hermosa Caba en la ribera  
 Del Tajo sin testigo:  
 El pecho sacó fuera  
 El Rio, y le habló de esta manera:

En mal punto te goces,  
 Injusto forzador, que ya el sonido  
 Oyo ya, y las voces  
 Las armas y el bramido  
 De Marte de furor y ardor ceñido.

¡ Ay esa tu alegría  
 Que llantos acarrea! y esa hermosa  
 Que vió el sol en mal dia,  
 A España, ¡ ay quan llorosa,  
 Y al ceptro de los Godos quan costosa!

Llamas, dolores, guerras,  
 Muertes, asolamientos, fieros males  
 Entre tus brazos cierras;  
 Trabajos inmortales  
 A tí, y á tus vasallos naturales.

A los que en Constantina  
 Rompen el fértil suelo, á los que baña  
 El Ebro, á la vecina  
 Sansueña, á Lusitania,  
 A toda la espaciosa y triste España.

Ya dende Cádiz llama  
 El injuriado Conde, á la venganza  
 Atento y no á la fama,  
 La bárbara pujanza,  
 En quien para su daño no hay tardanza.



Oye que al cielo toca  
 Con temeroso son la trompa fiera,  
 Que en Africa convoca  
 El Moro á la bandera,  
 Que al ayre desplegada va ligera.

La lanza ya blande  
 El Arabe cruel, y hiere al viento  
 Llamando á la pelea;  
 Innumerable cuento  
 De esquadras juntas veo en un momento.

Cubre la gente el suelo,  
 Debaxo de las velas desaparece  
 La mar, la voz al cielo  
 Confusa y varia crece,  
 El polvo roba el dia y le obscurece.

¡ Ay que ya presurosos  
 Suben las largas naves! ¡ Ay que tienden  
 Los brazos vigorosos  
 A los remos, y encienden  
 Los mares espumosos por dó hienden!

El Eolo derecho  
 Hinchla la vela en popa, y larga entrada  
 Por el Herculeo estrecho  
 Con la punta acerada  
 El gran padre Neptuno da á la armada.

Ay triste! y aun te tiene  
 El mal dulce regazo, ni llamado  
 Al mal que sobreviene  
 No acorres? ¡ ocupado  
 No ves ya el puerto á Hércules sagrado?

Acude, acorre, vuela,  
 Traspasa el alta sierra, ocupa el llano,  
 No perdones la espuela,



No des paz á la mano,  
Menea fulminando el hierro insano.

¡ Ay quanto de fatiga !  
¡ Ay quanto de dolor está presente  
Al que viste loriga,  
Al infante valiente,  
A hombres y caballos juntamente !

Y tú, Betis divino,  
De sangre agena y tuya amancillado,  
Darás al mar vecino,  
¡ Quanto yelmo quebrado !  
¡ Quanto cuerpo de nobles destrozado !

El furibundo Marte  
Cinco veces las haces desordena,  
Igual á cada parte :  
La sexta ¡ ay, te condena !  
¡ O cara pátria, á bárbara cadena !

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## SIGLO XVII.

### PROSA.

*Don Diego de Saavedra Faxardo.*

— El pasage que sigue se ha sacado de la *Republica Literaria* de Saavedra, autor de otra obra bastante conocida, intitulada *Idea de un Principe Cristiano representada en cien Em-*



*presas, y de la Corona Gotica.\** Finge Don Diego haber visto en sueños una ciudad llamada la *Republica Literaria*, la qual recorrió acompañado de Marco Varron quien se ofreció á enseñarle lo que de mas curioso é interesante habia en ella. Con esta alegoria describe los progresos de las Ciencias y Artes liberales y da cuenta de los varones mas ilustres que las han profesado. Publicóse esta obra en 1655, con el titulo de *Juicio de Artes y Ciencias*, y con el supuesto nombre de Claudio Antonio de Cabrera. En el pasage que sigue se trata de algunos poetas famosos.

“ Mas adelante á la luz de una ventana *Hernando de Herrera* † con gran atencion cotejaba los quilates de unos ingenios con otros en una piedra de parangon, en que me pareció, que cometeria algunos errores, porque muchas veces no son los ingenios, como parecen: algunos á la primera vista son vivos, y lucientes al parecer, pero de pocos quilates: otros aunque sin ostentacion tienen grandes fondos. Con todo eso quise saber dél (como de quien era tan versado en los poetas Toscanos y Españoles de nuestros

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\* Véase sobre este autor una de las notas á la Epoca tercera.

† Herrera publicó un Comentario de las obras de Garcilaso.



siglos) en que estimacion los tenia, y preguntádoselo con cortesía, me respondió con la misma en esta conformidad.

“ Cayó el Imperio Romano y cayéron (como es ordinario) envueltas en sus ruinas las ciencias y artes; hasta que dividida aquella grandeza, y asentados los dominios de Italia en diferentes formas de gobierno, floreció la paz y volviéron á brotar á su lado las ciencias.

“ Lo mismo que ha sucedido á los Italianos sucedió tambien á los ingenios de España.

“ Oprimió sus cervices el yugo Africano, de cuyas provincias paráron á ella sierpes barbas que pusieron miedo á sus Musas, las quales tratáron mas de retirarse á las montañas que de templar sus instrumentos; hasta que Juan de Mena, docto varon, les quitó el miedo y las reduxo á que entre el ruido de las armas levantasen la dulce harmonía de sus voces. En él hallarás mucho que admirar y que aprender; pero no primores que imitar; tal era entónces el horror á la villana ley de los consonantes, hallada en medio de la ignorancia, que se contentaban con explicar en copla sus conceptos, como quiera que fuese. Floreciéron despues el Marques de Santillana, Garci Sanchez, Costana,



Cartagena, y otros que poco á poco fuéron limando sus obras.

“ Ya en tiempos mas cultos escribió Garcilaso, y con la fuerza de su ingenio y natural, y la communicacion de los extrangeros puso en un grado muy levantado la poesía. Fué príncipe de la lírica, y con dulzura, gravedad, y maravillosa pureza de voces descubrió los sentimientos del alma, y como estos son tan propios de las canciones y eglogas, por eso en ellas se venció á sí mismo, declarando con elegancia los afectos y moviéndolos á lo que pretendia. Si en los sonetos es alguna vez descuidado, la culpa tienen los tiempos que alcanzó; en las eglogas con mucho decoro usa de dicciones sencillas y elegantes, y de palabras candidas, que saben al campo y á la rustiquez de la aldea, pero no sin gracia y con profunda ignorancia, y vejez, como hiciéron Mantuano y Encina en sus eglogas; porque temple lo rustico con la pureza de voces propias, imitando á Virgilio.

“ En Portugal floreció Camoes; honor de aquel reyno. Fué blando, amoroso, conceptuoso, y de gran ingenio en lo lírico y en lo epico. En los tiempos de Garcilaso escribió Boscan, que por ser extrangero en la lengua



merece mayor alabanza, y se le deben perdonar algunos descuidos en las voces.

“ Sucedió á estos Don Diego de Mendoza, el qual es vivo y maravilloso en los sentimientos y afectos del ánimo, pero flojo é inculto. Casi en aquellos tiempos floreció Cetina afectuoso y tierno, pero sin vigor ni nervio. Ya con mas luz nació Luis de Barahona, varon docto, y de levantado espíritu, pero sucedióle lo que á Ausonio, que no halló con quien consultarse, y así dexó correr libre su vena sin tiento, ni arte.

“ Este mismo tiempo alcanzó Juan de Arjona, y con mucha facilidad intentó la traduccion de Estacio encendiéndose de aquel espíritu; pero prevenido de la muerte la dexó comenzada, en la qual muestra gran viveza, y natural, siguiendo la ley de la traduccion, sin baxarse á menudencias y niñerías, como Anguilara en la traduccion ó perífrasis de los metamorfoseos de Ovidio.

“ Don Alonso de Ercilla, aunque por la ocupacion de las armas no pudo acaudalar la erudicion que para estos estudios se requiere, con todo eso en la Araucana mostró un gran



natural, y espíritu con fecunda y clara facilidad.

“ En nuestros tiempos renació un Marcial Cordoves en Don Luis de Gongora, requiebro de las Musas y Corifeo de las Gracias, gran artífice de la lengua Castellana, y quien mejor supo jugar con ella y descubrir los donaires de sus equivoccos, con incomparable agudeza. Quando en las veras dexa correr su natural, es culto y puro, sin que la sutileza de su ingenio haga impenetrables sus conceptos; como le sucedió despues queriendo retirarse del vulgo, y afectar la obscuridad: error que se disculpa, con que aun en esto mismo salió grande, y nunca imitable. Tal vez tropezó por falta de luz su Polifemo, pero ganó pasos de gloria. Si se perdió en sus Soledades, se halló despues tanto mas estimado quanto con mas cuidado le buscáron los ingenios y explicáron sus agudezas. Contemporaneo suyo fué Bartolome Leonardo de Argensola, gloria de Aragon y oraculo de Apolo, cuya facundia, erudicion, y gravedad con tan puro y levantado espíritu, y tan buena eleccion y juicio en la disposicion, en las palabras y sentencias, serán eternamente admiradas de todos y de pocos imitadas. La pluma poca advertida afeó sus obras y despues la estampa,



por no haberlas entendido ; peligro á que están expuestas las impresiones postumas.

“ Lope de Vega es una ilustre vega del Parnaso, tan fértil, que la elección se confundió en su fertilidad, y la naturaleza enamorada de su misma abundancia, despreció las sequedades y estrechezas del arte. En sus obras se ha de entrar, como en una rica almoneda, donde escojerás las joyas que fueren á tu propósito, que hallarás muchas.”

#### VERSO.

Ponense por muestra de la Poesía de este siglo la Oda de Don Manuel de Villegas de la que se ha hecho mención en el Ensayo,\* un Soneto de Don Francisco de Quevedo y una Décima de Calderón de la Barca.

#### ODA.

##### *Al Céfito.*

Dulce vecino de la verde selva  
Huesped eterno del Abril florido  
Vital aliento de la madre Venus  
Céfito blando,

---

\* Véase el título *Lyric Poetry*.



Si de mis ansias el amor supiste,  
 Tú, que las queexas de mi voz llevaste,  
 Oye, no temas, y á mi Ninfa dile  
 Dile que muero.

Filis un tiempo mi dolor sabia,  
 Filis un tiempo mi dolor lloraba,  
 Quisome un tiempo ; mas agora temo  
 Temo sus iras.

Así los Diones con amor paterno,  
 Así los cielos con amor benigno  
 Nieguen al tiempo que feliz volares,  
 Nieve á la tierra :

Jamás el peso de la nube parda,  
 Quando amanece en la elevada cumbre,  
 Toque tus hombros, ni su mal granizo  
 Hiera tus alas.

*Soneto de Don Francisco de Quevedo.*

A ROMA SEPULTADA EN SUS RUINAS.

Buscas en Roma á Roma, ó Peregrino,  
 Y en Roma misma á Roma no la hallas :  
 Cadaver son las que ostentó murallas  
 Y tumba de sí propio el Aventino :

Yace donde reynaba el Palatino,  
 Y limadas del tiempo las medallas,  
 Mas se muestran destrozo á las batallas  
 De las edades, que Blason Latino.

Solo el Tibre quedó, cuya corriente  
 Si Ciudad la regó, ya sepultura  
 La llora con funesto son doliente.



O Roma, en tu grandeza, en tu hermosura  
 Huyó lo que era firme, y solamente  
 Lo fugitivo permanece y dura.

*Apólogo de Calderon de la Barca.*

Cuentan de un sabio que un dia  
 Tan pobre y misero estaba  
 Que solo se sustentaba  
 De unas hierbas que cogia.  
 ¿ Habrá otro (entre sí decia)  
 Mas triste y pobre que yo?  
 Y quando el rostro volvió  
 Halló la respuesta, viendo  
 Que iba otro sabio cogiendo  
 Las hojas que él arrojó.\*

En la Comedia la Vida es sueño.

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\* El mal gusto que se habia introducido á fines del siglo xvi. hizo rapidos progresos en el siguiente, por cuyo motivo en las obras de los grandes ingenios que florecieron en él y principalmente durante el Reynado de Felipe IV. á lado de las mas hermosas descripciones é imagenes se ven las metáforas mas desproporcionadas, y las expresiones mas afectadas y ridiculas. Al Toro se le llama Baxel viviente *en que Jove embarcó su monarquía* por haber tomado el Padre de los dioses la forma de este animal para robar á Europa; *Partenope y Trinacria encienden al Vesubio y á Mongibelo para celebrar unas exequias*: un eclipse total es *desafio del sol y de la luna en que estos dos faroles divinos luchan á luz entera ya que no á brazo partido* y otras extravagancias aun mayores.



## SIGLO XVIII.

## PROSA.

Los dos pasages siguientes se han sacado de las obras del P. M. Feijoo y del Arte Poetica de Luzan quienes con su exemplo y preceptos contribuyeron en gran manera á la restauracion de las Letras. A estas muestras se ha añadido parte de un Discurso sobre el Comercio sacado del Apendice á la Educacion popular de Don Pedro Rodriguez de Campomanes.

*El Estudio acorta la Vida.*

“ Para contrapeso de los hermosos atractivos con que las letras encienden el amor de los estudiosos, se introduxo la persuasion universal, de que los estudios abrevian á la vida los plazos. Pension terrible, si es verdadera! ¿Que importa que el sabio exceda al ignorante lo que el racional al bruto; que el entendimiento instruido se distinga de el inculto, como el dia-



mante colocado en la joya de el que yace escondido en la mina, si quantos pasos se dan en el progreso de la ciencia son tropiezos en la carrera de la vida? Igualó Seneca los Sabios á los Dioses; pero si son mas perecederos que los demás hombres, distan mas que todos de la Deidad, porque distan mas que todos de la inmortalidad. La virtud, supremo ornamento de la Alma, es parto legitimo de la ciencia; *Virtutem doctrina parit*, que decia Horacio. Pero quantos exclamarán con Bruto al tiempo de morir: *O infeliz virtud!* Si esta misma luz, que corona al hombre de rayos, es fuego que le reduce á cenizas? La honra, compañera inseparable de la sabiduria, será corto estimulo de la applicacion en quien juzgue, que los pasos que da ácia los resplandores de el aplauso, son vuelos ácia las lobregueces de el sepulcro."

Feijoo, Teat. Crit. Tom. I. Disc. 7. Desagravio de la Profesion Literaria.

*Sabiduria aparente.*

" Los sabios verdaderos son modestos y cándidos; y estas dos virtudes son dos grandes enemigas de su fama. El que mas sabe, sabe que es mucho menos lo que sabe que lo que ignora; y asi como su discrecion se lo da á conocer, su sinceridad se lo hace confesar; pero en grave perjuicio de su aplauso, porque



estas confesiones, como de testigos que deponen contra sí propios, son velozmente creídas; y por otra parte el Vulgo no tiene por docto á quien en su profesion ignora algo, siendo imposible que nadie lo sepa todo.

“ Son tambien los sabios comunmente tímidos; porque son los que mas desconfian de sí propios; y aunque digan divinidades, si con lengua trémula, ó voz apagada las articulan, llegan desautorizadas á los oídos que las atienden. Mas oportuno es para ganar credits delirar con valentía, que discurrir con perplexidad: porque la estimacion, que se debia á discretas dudas, se ha hecho tributo de temerarias resoluciones. O quanto aprovecha á un ignorante presumido la eficacia del ademan, y el estrepito de la voz! Y quanto se disimulan con los esfuerzos del pecho las flaquezas del discurso! Siendo asi que el vocinglero por el mismo caso debiera hacerse sospechoso de su poca solidéz; porque los hombres son como los cuerpos sonoros, que hacen ruido mayor quando están huecos.

“ Si á estas ventajosas apariencias se junta alguna literatura, logran una gran violenta actividad para arrastrar el comun asenso.”

Feijoo, Disc. 8.



*Utilidad de la Poesia.*

“ El origen de la utilidad poetica consiste en que siendo nuestra vista debil y corta, y no pudiendo por eso sufrir sin cegar todo de golpe los rayos de la moral, se acomoda con gusto y provecho á la moderada luz de la Poesia, que con sus fábulas y velos interpuestos rompe el primer ímpetu, y templá la actividad de la luz de las demas ciencias. Tras esto, como los hombres apetecen mas lo deleytable que lo provechoso, encuentran desabrido todo lo que no los engolosina con el saynete de algun deleyte: y esto es lo que se halla abundantemente en la Poesia, y la hace utilisima; pues las otras ciencias nos enseñan la verdad simple y desnuda, y el camino de la gloria arduo, áspero y lleno de abrojos; mas por lo contrario la Poesia nos enseña la verdad, pero adornada de ricas galas, y como dixo el Taso, sazónada en dulces versos, y nós guía á la virtud y á la gloria por un camino amenisimo, cuya hermosura engaña y embelesa de tal suerte nuestro cansancio, que nos hallamos en la cumbre sin sentir que hemos subido una cuesta muy áspera. Nos dice por exemplo la Filosofia que la pobreza puede ser feliz si quiere serlo; que vencer una pasión propia es



mayor hazaña que triunfar de un enemigo; que ni la riqueza ni el poder hacen felices á los hombres, &c. Estas y otras mil máximas y verdades semejantes que nos enseña la Filosofía son simples, desnudas y cuesta arriba para el vulgo, que despreciándolas por su desnudez y desechándolas por su novedad ó no les da oídos ó las juzga extravagantes é impracticables. Pero la Poesía siguiendo otro rumbo propone estas mismas máximas con tal artificio, con tales adornos y con colores y luces tan proporcionadas á la corta vista del vulgo, que no hallando este razón para negarse á ellas, es preciso que se dé á partido y se dexé vencer de su persuasión. Las severas máximas de la Filosofía no solo no adornan la verdad ni persuaden la virtud que enseñan, sino que antes parece que ahuyentan á los hombres de ellas por la austeridad y entereza que ostenta; pero la Poesía persuade con increíble fuerza aquello mismo que enseña. La Filosofía en fin habla al entendimiento, la Poesía al corazón en cuyo interior alcazar, introduciendo disfrazadas las máximas filosóficas, se enseñorea de él como por interpresa y logra con extratagemas lo que otras ciencias no pueden lograr con guerra abierta.

“ Esta es la utilidad principal de la Poesía: á la qual se puede añadir la que resulta de la



misma considerada como recreo y entretenimiento honesto, en cuya consideracion hace grande ventaja á todas las demas diversiones; pues la Poesia, finalmente, aunque carezca de toda otra utilidad, tiene por lo menos la de enseñar discrecion, eloqüencia y elegancia.”

*Arte Poetica, Tomo I. Cap. ii.*

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*Discurso sobre el Comercio, por el Conde de Campomanes.*

“Tienen las artes prácticas, á que llamamos oficios, una relacion íntima con el comercio. Las producciones naturales de la tierra son el fundamento de las artes; y constituyen por sí mismas un ramo considerable del tráfico.

“Si el comercio hace circular géneros de fuera, merecen muy diversa atencion, que si los géneros comerciables son producto de la agricultura, y artes, establecidas en el propio país.

“A tres clases generales se pueden reducir todos los géneros comerciables: conviene á



saber, productos naturales de la tierra, manufacturas, y signos. Recomendase la utilidad del comercio por la necesidad, que tienen los particulares y las naciones enteras, de comprar lo preciso, y de vender lo sobrante de sus producciones. De otra manera carecerian de las cosas absolutamente necesarias, como son los granos y demas abastos en tiempo de carestías; de los metales, que no produxese el propio suelo: de las yerbas y drogas medicinales para curacion de las enfermedades, ó para los tintes; de los materiales de construccion; y de las primeras materias, que emplean las manufacturas.

“La nacion mas industriosa y activa, cruzaría sus brazos, si el comercio no le asegurase el transporte de las primeras materias á unos precios convenientes; y tan bien acondicionadas, que el arte pueda aprovecharlas en las diferentes formas, que saben darles los oficios.

“La nacion agricultora, dueña de minas de toda clase de metales, y de qualquiera otra especie de producciones naturales, tiene una riqueza propia é inagotable: de la qual dependen las naciones industriosas, que saben transmutar estas producciones naturales en las



diversas formas artificiales; apropiándolas al uso de los hombres; quales son las manufacturas, muebles, edificios, etc.

“ Aquella nacion que reune en sí misma los productos naturales, y la aplicacion bien dirigida, para reducirles á productos artificiales, tiene en su arbitrio un manantial fecundo de riqueza; porque la naturaleza y el arte concurren á dar ocupacion ventajosa á sus naturales. Si hay alguna nacion, que llegase á conseguir tamaña felicidad, puede creerse, que esto sucede en la China, y en otras algunas partes de la India-Oriental.

“ Los hombres no pueden alcanzar el modo, de que cada uno supla á todos sus menesteres, sin valerse del auxilio de otros hombres; ya sea en su alimento, vestido, curacion de enfermedades, habitacion, y defensa de los insultos agenos, por medio de los empleados en el gobierno, y administracion pública; ó de la instruccion y enseñanza de los demas hombres. Esta recíproca dependencia, que tienen los mortales entre sí, obligó á los pueblos mas remotos, y contrarios, á tratarse y conocerse, para ocurrir las respectivas necesidades por medio del comercio. La buena fe se esta-



bleció por el miedo de no ser engañados, ó privados de la contratacion, y despacho de sus géneros vendibles.

“ La desigualdad en el comercio de las naciones es una prueba del abandono, ó de la inadvertencia de la nacion, que admite semejantes pactos; porque debiendo ser recíproca la condicion de compradores y vendedores, con superior razon procede esto de nacion á nacion.

“ Un autor Inglés se quejaba, de que muchas personas públicas, que suelen intervenir en la formacion de tratados, no se hallen bien instruidos en los interéses generales de comercio de su país; y que de ahí resulta no sacar en los actos públicos todas las ventajas, que puede ofrecer la suerte de las armas, por la menor instruccion de los contratantes vencedores. Semejantes artes valen poco, siempre que cada nacion promueve la independendencia, ó los medios de bastarse á sí misma: ó sea la propia agricultura y artes, para suplir á todo su consumo: que es el modo esencial, de no necesitar introducir las cosas precisas, de mano de otra nacion. Entónces quedan por sí mismas desvanecidas las convenciones poco favorables.”



## APENDICE.

**EL** reynado de Carlos III. en que floreció el autor del último Ensayo, produjo tantos escritores insignes que de los extractos de sus mejores obras pudieran formarse muchos tomos, los quales harian manifiesto el engaño de los que confesando que España produjo varones muy sabios en los siglos anteriores, pretenden que sus naturales estan de mucho tiempo á esta parte envueltos en las tinieblas de la mas profunda ignorancia, llegando casi á confundirlos con los Hotentotes ó con los bárbaros habitantes de la moderna Tracia.\* Pero tambien es preciso confesar que si en el siglo xviii. ha habido hombres que han escrito con tanta pureza como los que ilustraron el reynado de Carlos V. y de sus primeros sucesores, y aun con mas lógica y mejor gramática que aquellos,

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\* Montesquieu y otros escritores han comparado los Españoles á los Turcos.



tambien ha habido otros que usando de voces, expresiones y modismos venidos de allende, han corrompido el Romance de tal manera que si Cervantes, Granada y demas escritores sus contemporaneos volviesen al mundo crearian hallarse en pays extranjero. Don José Cadalso que es uno de los que con mas zelo han procurado detener los progresos del mal trae en sus Cartas Marruecas un Ensayo del estilo moderno, el qual pondré aquí para que al ver la diferencia que hay entre esta gerigonza ridícula é ininteligible y el modo de escribir de los buenos autores queden convencidos los que se dedican al estudio de la lengua Castellana y desean hablarla y escribirla con pureza, que el logro de su intento depende principalmente de la acertada eleccion de libros.

Supone Don José Cadalso que el Ensayo siguiente es una carta escrita por una Señorita Española á otra. No sabemos si es una mera imitacion del estilo moderno hecha por el autor ó bien una carta verdadera que por alguna casualidad cayese en sus manos. La conversacion, las obras originales que se publican en el dia y principalmente las traducciones de novelas y otros escritos franceses que inundan la Peninsula ofrecen exemplos que si no son tan malos como ella, no les falta mucho.



“ Hoy no ha sido día en mi apartamento hasta medio día y medio. Tomé dos tazas de thé: púseme un deshábille y bonete de noche: hize un tour en mi jardín: leí cerca de ocho versos del segundo acto de la Zaira. Vino Mr. Labanda: empecé mi toeleta: no estuvo el Abate. Mandé pagar mi modista. Pasé á la sala de compañía: me sequé toda sola. Entró un poco de mundo; jugué una partida de mediator: tiré las cartas. Jugué al piquete. El maitre de hotel avisó. Mi nuevo Xefe de cocina es divino, el viene de arriivar de Paris. La crapaudina mi plato favorito estaba deliciosa. Tomé café y licor. Otra partida de quince; perdí mi todo. Fui al espetáculo; la pieza que han dado es exécrable: la pequeña pieza que han anunciado para el Lunes que viene, es muy galante, pero los actores son pitoyables: los vestidos horribles, las decoraciones tristes. La mayorita cantó una caba-tina pasablemente bien. El actor que hace los criados, es un poquito extremado, sin eso seria pasable. El que hace los amorosos, no jugaria mal; pero su figura no es previniente. Es menester tomar paciencia, porque es preciso matar el tiempo. Sali al tercer acto y me volví de allí á casa. Tomé de la limonada: entré en mi gabinete para escribirte esta porque soy tu veritable amiga. Mi hermano no aban-



dona su humor de misantropo: él siente todavía furiosamente el siglo pasado y no le pondré jamas en estado de brillar: aora quiere irse á su provincia. Mi primo ha dexado á la jóven persona que él entretenia. Mi tio ha dado en la devocion; ha sido en vano que yo he pretendido hacerle entender la razon. Adios, mi querida amiga, hasta otra posta, y ceso porque me traen un dominó nuevo para ensayar."

VERSO.

*Don Joseph Iglesias.*

Hablando de cierta historia,  
A un necio se preguntó:  
Te acuerdas tú? Y respondió:  
Esperen que haga memoria.

Mi Ines, viendo su idiotismo,  
Dixo risueña al momento:  
Haz tambien entendimiento  
Que te costará lo mismo.

*Don Juan Melendez Valdes.*

EL PENSAMIENTO.\*

Qual suele abeja inquieta revolando  
Por florido pensil entre mil rosas,

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\* Añadiré la traduccion libre ó mas bien la imitacion de este Soneto, hecha por un amigo mio cuya modestia iguala su saber é inteligencia de la Literatura Española.



Hasta venir á hallar las mas hermosas,  
Andar con dulce trompa susurrando ;

Mas luego que las ve con vuelo blando  
Baxa y bate las alas vagarosas,  
Y en medio de sus hojas olorosas  
El delicado aroma está gozando :

Así, mi bien, el pensamiento mio  
Con dichosa zozobra por hallarte  
Vagaba de amor libre por el suelo.

Pero te ví, rendíme ; y mi albedrío  
Abrasado en tu luz goza al mirarte  
Gracias que envidia de tu rostro el cielo.

*El Mismo.*

IMITATION.

Even as the bee, 'mid circling roses flies,  
Nor pauses once to rest his wandering wing,  
Until, at length, the fairest he descries,  
And sinks upon its bosom murmuring ;—  
There, fix'd and fluttering with delight, he lies,  
Incumbent on its dewy, fragrant leaves,  
From its soft cup the honey draught receives,  
And scents th' aroma perfumes as they rise :  
So, with a palpitating heart, my love,  
I traced my lowly path in search of thee ;  
Thou wert the Rose, and I the humble Bee,  
For thee my every thought, my fancy strove ;  
I saw—I lov'd ; and feast my gladden'd eyes  
On charms that shame the lustre of the skies.

M.



*El Conde de Noroña.*

## RETRATO DE LA TRISTEZA DEL DOCTOR YOUNG.

Sobre la negra tumba recostado  
 Está el anciano Young; contemplo atento  
 Baxo la losa todo su contento,  
 Porque nada la Muerte le ha dexado;

Con lágrimas su rostro está bañado,  
 Y temblando su cuerpo macilento;  
 Solo consta de un ay su triste acento,  
 Que resuena en el techo embovedado.

¡Supremo Ser, exclama, que, subido  
 Sobre el cerco de estrellas prodigioso,  
 Ves con tedio al que gusta de esta vida,

Quando será mi espíritu impelido  
 De tu potente diestra, y con reposo  
 Hará junto á tu trono su manida?

*El Mismo.**Don Juan de Iriarte.*

## EPIGRAMA.

“A la Abeja semejante,  
 Para que cause placer,  
 El epigrama ha de ser:  
 Pequeño, dulce y punzante.”

*Don Thomas de Iriarte.*

## LA VÍBORA Y LA SANGUIJUELA.

Aunque la dos picamos, (dixo un dia  
 La Víbora á la simple Sanguijuela)



De tu boca reparo que se fia  
El hombre, y de la mia se recela.

La Chupona responde: Ya, querida;  
Mas no picamos de la misma suerte:  
Yo, si pico á un enfermo, le doy vida:  
Tú, picando al mas sano, le das muerte.

Vaya ahora de paso una advertencia:  
Muchos censuran, sí, Lector benigno;  
Pero á fe que hay bastante diferencia  
De un Censor útil á un Censor maligno.

*Don J. B. Arriaza.*

## EL PESCADOR.

### IDILIO.

Orillas del Mar tendido  
Un pescador á sus solas  
Como la roca á las olas  
Así burlaba á Cupido:

No pretendas, Dios traidor,  
Que te doble la rodilla,  
Mi tesoro es mi barquilla,  
Mis redes solo mi amor.

Quando algun incauto pez  
Entra en mis redes, le digo:  
Tal quisiera hacer conmigo  
El amor alguna vez:

Pero no espere el traidor  
Un vasallo en esta orilla;  
Que mi bien es mi barquilla  
Mis redes solo mi amor.



Yo ví de Nerina ingrata  
Al amante, ¡pobrecillo!  
Que no ví ningun barquillo  
A quien mas la mar combata:

¿Y me ofrecerás, traidor  
Una ley que tanto humilla?  
No; mi bien es mi barquilla,  
Mis redes solo mi amor.

La bella Silvia, que en tanto  
Por la ribera venia,  
Oyó como repetia  
El marinero en su canto:

“Nunca mandarás, traidor,  
En mi voluntad sencilla:  
Que mi bien es mi barquilla,  
Mis redes solo mi amor.”

Entonces Silvia le mira,  
Y el corazon le penetra;  
El va á repetir su letra,  
Y en vez de cantar suspira.

A Dios, pobre pescador,  
A Dios red, á Dios barquilla,  
Que ya no hay en esta orilla,  
Sino Vasallos de Amor.

FIN.



G SMALLFIELD, Printer, Hackney.



















Anaya, Angel

An essay on Spanish Literature containing Its History, from the commencement of the Twelfth Century, to the present time ; with an Account of the best Writers, in their several Departments, and some critical remarks: followed by A History of the Spanish drama and specimens of some

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